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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

SWEET INISFAIL (Serial Story) ... 169
FOR LOVE—OR GOLD? (Complete Story) ... 172
THE READER'S BOOK-MARKER IN A FRENCH POLICE-COURT ... 173

USEFUL HINTS AND RECIPES ... 176
DRESSES AND BROTH (Serial Story) ... 177
THE WITHEED BRANCH (Serial Story) ... 181

CONTENTS.

LOCKING THE STABLE DOOR (Poetry) ... 184
THE HOUSEWIFE ... 185
SHADES AND SUSBANS (Story in Two Parts. Part II.) ... 185

THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER (Complete Story) ... 188
SCIENCE ... 191
FACETIME ... 191
NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS ... 192



["OUT WITH IT, OLD MAN, OUT WITH IT!"]

SWEET INISFAIL.

A ROMANCE.

BY RICHARD DOWLING,

AUTHOR OF

"The Mystery of Killard," "The Weird Sisters," "The Duke's Sweetheart," "A Sapphire Ring," etc.

PART I.—INHERITANCE.

CHAPTER I.

A HAPPY HOME.

DONCASTER STREET is one of the quietest and most retiring of the avenues leading out of King's Road, Chelsea. It is dull by day, and deserted by night. The rumble of traffic seldom

invades the noon, and at night the infrequent vehicles passing by simply remind one that a great city is at hand, without imposing upon the consideration the magnitude of that city's transactions.

Doncaster Street, towards the river end, is composed wholly of small private houses. A little way down it, from the King's Road, are to be found small shops of an unpretending and miscellaneous character.

Number 57, Doncaster Street, is one of the private houses at the river-end, and is distinguishable from no other in the same row by any marked feature. Although it is in what may be called the heart of London, it does not share all modern improvements; for instance, the whole house is not lighted with gas, and on the evening of the 1st of May, 18—, the little sitting-room on the first floor of Number 57 was lighted by a lamp.

Mrs. Manton was stitching at the centre table close by the lamp. Now and then she

raised her head from her work to see that her son Freddy, a lively boy of three, got into no harm and did no mischief.

It was past seven o'clock, and Mrs. Manton, a comely, blue-eyed, fresh-complexioned little matron of twenty-six years, was awaiting the return of her husband, George, for the evening.

A more contented, happy, joyous little woman it would be hard to find. She was not a great beauty, but she was exceedingly lovable-looking, and she had made the only conquest for which she had ever cared, and that was her husband's heart. She had no anxiety of any kind upon her mind; she had no trouble of any kind in her heart. She was at peace with all the world, and all the world seemed at peace with her. In the daytime, when George was away, her little son was company enough for her; in the evening, when George came back, the measure of her happiness was full, and she could think of no addition or change which would add to her contentment.

Freddy was, like his mother, bright and blue-eyed and cheerful; but, unlike her, he was very tall, that is, for his age. Anyone who saw the mother and son together, and had not seen the father, would be puzzled to find so tall a child of so little a mother. But the father, George, was six feet two, a giant, in fact, and, like all giants, amiable and peaceful in the highest degree.

"Freddy," said the mother, dropping her work and looking up, "there's papa."

The boy let go the piece of string with which he was tying the leg of a toy dog to the leg of a chair, that the dog might so be prevented—thus he explained his motive—from springing upon his mother and eating her all up.

The wife's ear had detected the step of her husband in the quiet street, as he drew near his home.

Before the boy could reach the door of the sitting-room, a key turned in the latch and the front door opened. With a shout the boy trotted downstairs and rushed into his father's arms in the hall.

The father took the boy up in his arms, and asked him after the health of his mother and the dog; and then, having hung his hat on the rack, he carried the boy upstairs, and found his little wife waiting for him at the head of the stairs.

He put his disengaged arm round her waist, stooped and kissed her, and then, saying, "It is easier to carry two than one," lifted her off the ground, and so, doubly burdened, walked into the small sitting-room, where he set them both down with a laughing declaration that he'd rather carry them so far than a thousand miles.

He threw himself into a chair, stretched out his long legs before him, sighed, and laughed, and said, when he had done laughing:

"Well, I am tired!"

Then he looked round the comfortable little room, and then at his boy, and then at his wife, as though she said to himself, Where could a man be more rested, or soothed, or cheered, or made happy, than here?

"You're starved, I know, George," said Mrs. Manton.

"How do you know that, Helen?" he asked, taking the boy on his knee.

"I knew it by your eye," she said, getting up from where she sat.

"What! Do you mean to say there was cannibalism in my eyes when I looked at you and the boy a moment ago? Shall I eat you up, Freddy, by way of giving mean appetite for your mother?" he said, making a face at the boy.

The boy laughed with delight at the notion.

"I declare," said Mrs. Manton, "this is most extraordinary. The last thing Freddy said before you came in was that his doggie wanted to eat me!"

"And so he would," broke in Freddy, "only I tied him up."

"And here are you now, George, talking of something of the same kind."

He laughed, and threw his head back, saying:

"You women are all the same. If two things anything alike happen close to one another, men call it a coincidence; but you women will not be satisfied with any explanation so commonplace, and must attach some mysterious importance to the most ordinary things that occur haphazard."

"There, now, George, give up abusing us, and come down and dine; that will put you in a better humour," she said.

"I am so tired," he answered, "I do not know whether I shall be able to walk down or not. You two carry me; I carried you two in."

The boy shouted, "Yes, mamma, we'll carry papa!" and, slipping down, he caught hold of his father's leg.

"Jesting apart, Helen, I am quite done up. It is four years since I had a holiday, and I feel that if I do not get a rest and change I shall break down."

"Break down, you great giant!" she cried.

"You cannot frighten me with such talk. I know there is no man in London wants a hol-

iday more than you, and you shall have one, no matter what cost."

She ran her fingers affectionately through his long, light, curly hair, and patted his cheek with her soft, dimpled hand.

"This is the 1st of May, and before the month is over you must leave London, it does not matter for where. You must have a whole month to do just what you please."

"All by myself?" he asked, looking up with a smile.

"All by yourself, if you like," she said, seriously. "You must be tired of me and the boy."

His eyes became more tender at this speech of gentle self-sacrifice. He knew his wife loved him more than all the world besides. He knew the greatest treat the world could give her would be that she might be at his side when he took his rest. And yet, because she thought it better for him to take his vacation alone, she instantly put aside the temptation of accompanying him.

He took her hand in his, and said, in a grave, sweet voice:

"Helen, a speech such as that makes two people, husband and wife, more than years of what is commonly called devotion to one another. I'll start on my holidays this month if I can, and I'll go alone. And now, little woman, tell out everything in the house, except you and Freddy. Let us go down to dinner."

At that moment a loud double knock sounded at the front door.

"Do you expect anyone, George?" said Mrs. Manton, "for I do not."

"I don't expect anyone," he said. "It must be a chance visitor. And," he added, with a comic groan, "we must ask him to dinner, and I can't have all!"

CHAPTER II.

"CLOMMORE! CLOMMORE!"

THEY remained listening awhile, until the front door was opened by the servant, and a voice, very familiar to both their ears, asked:

"Is Mr. Manton at home, my dear?" And then added in a tone of exaggerated admiration: "Jane, you're looking positively lovely!"

"It's Fitzgerald," said Manton, going towards the door.

"Jane will bring an action for breach of promise of marriage against him one of these days if he doesn't mind himself," said Mrs. Manton, with a smile, as she took the boy up in her arms and followed her husband to the sitting-room door.

There was a quick knock, and an invitation to enter, followed by the opening of the door and the appearance of a tall, slender young man, with light blue eyes, fresh complexion, and rich brown hair, moustaches and beard.

"Just in time for dinner, Fitzgerald," said Manton. "We were going down."

"Oh, confound dinner!" said Fitzgerald, taking the boy out of the mother's arms and throwing him up in the air within an inch of the ceiling. "Sit down a minute, Mrs. Manton, and I'll pay for the soup if it is spoiled, just for the pleasure of paying for one thing in my life; for I am a rich man at last!"

Mrs. Manton sank into a chair.

"What?" cried Manton; "is the old man gone at last?"

"Yes, I had a telegram an hour ago. He kept me poor while he was alive. He could not keep the property away from me, or he would have done so. And now, Freddy," said Fitzgerald, turning to the boy, "which would you rather have—a shipload of chocolate cream, or a rocking-horse that could jump over St. Paul's?"

The boy looked at his friend in blue-eyed wonder, and was mute a moment, appalled by the awful alternative. After a few seconds' silence it was plain he could not decide.

"I'd rather," he said, "have a gun that would shoot skewers first."

"You shall have a blunderbuss, my boy, and, if you like it, a Woolwich Infant, too."

"I hate little children!" said the boy, with a look of disappointment on his face.

"You must not worry Mr. Fitzgerald," said the mother, with a smile, as she took her boy from the visitor.

"Worry me, my dear madam!" he exclaimed.

"What can worry a man who is newly rich?"

"The loss of his riches," said Manton, with a smile. "By the way, Fitzgerald, what do you think the property will fetch? You have always told me you would sell the moment you inherited."

"Well, Manton, if I am lucky, I shall get ten thousand pounds for it."

"Is that all?" said Manton. "I understand from you it was worth about a thousand a year."

"Ay, once, but things have altered over the way since; and I'll sell you my interest for ten thousand down—ay, for nine, if you give me a cheque on the spot."

"Before I close, then," said Manton, playfully, "where exactly is this property which I am about to buy?"

"Close to Clonmore, one of the chief towns of the county Tipperary, Ireland, at your service," said Fitzgerald, placing his hand upon his heart and making a low bow.

Mrs. Manton was amused by this little pleasantries passing between her husband and his friend. She followed with her eye the bending form of the latter. The eyes of the boy were also fixed on Fitzgerald, and Fitzgerald's own eyes were bent on the ground. Thus, when he made that speech and gesture, no eye was watching the fate of George Manton, which, upon the mention of Clonmore, descended up and twitched convulsively. But the unusual expression almost instantly passed away.

"Clonmore! Clonmore! What is on my mind about Clonmore, George?"

"Possibly," said Fitzgerald, "some premonition of your future home, and your feudal state therein."

Again he bowed.

"Clonmore! Clonmore!" said the wife, setting down her boy that she might be freer to think. "Surely there is something in my mind about that place. What can it be? George, can you tell me? Clonmore!"

"Perhaps you have heard Fitzgerald speak of his place before," said the husband, uneasily.

"No, no," she said, looking grave and puzzled. "It is something about you, George—something about you and silence and darkness—"

"Good heavens, madam! This begins to interest me, as they say on the stage," said Fitzgerald.

Manton had turned a little pale, and his uneasiness increased.

"I do not know what you can be thinking of, Helen. The dinner will not be worth eating. Let us go down."

"Clonmore!" she said, speaking in a reverie.

"Where can I have heard George say that word?"

Manton looked still more disconcerted.

"I shall make Fitzgerald pay for the whole dinner at this rate," said Manton, forcing a smile. "Come along."

Fitzgerald offered Mrs. Manton his arm, and the husband took up the boy to carry him down, for he was an only child, and indulged beyond his years, and sat at the table during the whole of dinner.

Just as they reached the landing, Mrs. Manton turned round, and, looking with a bright smile into the face of her tall husband just behind her,

"I know now, George," she said. "Don't you remember one night, a week ago, when you were moaning in your sleep, I woke you. You had been moaning out, 'Clonmore,' and when I had aroused you and asked you what troubled you about Clonmore, you said, 'I must have been dreaming, dear, some foolish dream, and called out some still more foolish name,' and then you told me to go to sleep, but I could not, and I know you lay awake for hours."

CHAPTER III.

AN UNCOMFORTABLE DINNER.

The little procession proceeded down the stairs without further remark, and when Mrs. Manton found herself in the dining-room her attention was distracted from her husband by the duties of the table; and as for Fitzgerald, he was too happy and vivacious and full of his new good fortune to notice the alteration which had taken place in Manton's manner.

Conversation, in so far as there was any at the early portion of the dinner, was wholly conducted by Fitzgerald and Freddy. To this bright and confiding boy, promises of the most preposterous and outlandish character were made. He was, regardless of the expense, to have every marvel of magic mentioned in the fairy books : flying carpets, invisible horses, vanishing caps, seven-league boots, enchanted lamps, rings of marvellous potency, and, finally, he was to be Robinson Crusoe and the King of the Cannibal Islands rolled into one. And all these wonders were to come out of Michael Fitzgerald's newly-acquired fortune.

Mrs. Manton, in the periods of her leisure as hostess, listened and smiled, and encouraged the extravagant imagination of her guest. But no sooner had he alluded to the Cannibal Islands than she laughed, and, looking at her husband, said :

"Is not this a second coincidence?"

"Yes," he said, absently. "Yes, no doubt it is." He forced a smile, raised his glass to his lips, and said no more.

For the first time, Mrs. Manton caught the look of unaccustomed depression in her husband's face, and, coupling it with what he had said when he came in, she lost her look of bright vivacity. She thought to herself :

"There may really be something in what George has said, of his break down."

Then, suddenly, all her mind took alarm, and, to the exclusion of every other idea, her thoughts ran upon the subject of her husband's health.

She knew that the greatest friend George had in the world was this Michael Fitzgerald. She liked the good-looking, good-humoured, easy-going Irishman, who she knew, from many tales of him told by her husband, carried under his gay and debonair manner, a highly sympathetic nature. What could be better than, if George were to go on a holiday, he should have Fitzgerald for a companion? She looked at the Irishman, and said :

"I suppose, Mr. Fitzgerald, you will have to go over to Ireland about this matter?"

"Oh, yes," he said, turning lightly from the boy to her ; "this is my P.P.C. visit. I start for Kingstown by the mail to-morrow evening from Euston."

"In a steamboat?" asked the boy.

"Not exactly from Euston," laughed Fitzgerald, "but I shall have to go a long way on a steamboat before I get to the end."

"And will you find the island when you are in the steamboat?" asked the boy, eagerly.

"I hope so," answered Fitzgerald, with a smile, "for if not I shall find the bottom."

"I don't want the bottom," said the boy ; "I want Robinson Crusoe's island, and Friday and the parrot and the gun and the savages."

"I promise you, Freddy, I shall bring them all to you if I can. They will take up a little room, and you must ask your father to lend me a portmanteau or a chest to put them in."

"Papa, will you lend Mr. Fitzgerald your big portmanteau?"

"Yes, Freddy," said the father, absent-mindedly.

"Or better still," broke in Mrs. Manton, "pack up your portmanteau, get leave of absence from the Society for a month, and start to-morrow evening, with Mr. Fitzgerald, for Clonmore."

"Capital! capital! capital!" exclaimed Fitzgerald. "You must do it; you shall do it. I will pack up your portmanteau myself to-night, before I leave. You shall come and feast in my baronial halls. You shall hunt the red deer and

unhood the falcon. I haven't any baronial halls, I haven't any red deer, and I haven't any falcons, but there's a capital hotel at Clonmore, and you know what I mean."

"Eh?" said Manton, looking up.

He had caught but imperfectly what his wife had said, and Fitzgerald's speech had helped only to destroy the little he had caught.

"I was saying, George," said Mrs. Manton, looking with grave anxiety at her husband, "that you ought to get leave of absence and go over with Mr. Fitzgerald to Clonmore, for a month."

He looked up with a sudden flash in his eye, and a sudden flush upon his cheek, and cried, in a strong, firm voice :

"For my honour, Helen, I think you are right. I ought to go over at once and see how matters stand. The present condition of things is intolerable."

His wife looked at him in amazement.

"By Jove!" said Fitzgerald, in a low tone of surprise. "I never knew you were a politician, or took strong interest in politics."

"Politics? I did not say anything about politics. I was not thinking of politics."

Fitzgerald looked from husband to wife and from wife to husband, and saw at a glance that something was working in the mind of the latter, of which the former knew nothing. He immediately resolved on being as guarded as possible. He knew no husband and wife in London lived on better terms than this pair, and he had believed up to a moment ago that no secret existed between them. Here, undoubtedly, was something in the mind of George wholly unknown to his wife. In order to give his friends time to recover themselves, he made some playful remark to the boy.

For a while Mrs. Manton leaned back in her chair, with a look of helpless questioning on her face. Then she said, in a very quiet voice, in which could be detected a faint trill of pain :

"What is it, George, that troubled you in your sleep about Clonmore, and that now makes you anxious to go there to put something right? You never told me anything about this place, anything about this thing, whatever it is."

Although Fitzgerald was most intimate with the Mantons, he could not but feel very uncomfortable at the turn conversation had taken.

Dinner was over by this time, and if he could possibly have done so, without emphasizing the unpleasantness, he would have left at once. But to go now would be to show he knew something was amiss.

Manton did not answer readily. He played with his cheese knife, cut a piece of bread off the loaf and placed it beside him as though he were going to eat it, and then seemed to forget what he had done. He raised his eyes to Fitzgerald with a look of candid pain, and then dropped them on the cloth with a look of perplexity.

"I told you, Helen, when I came in, I was tired and overworked and afraid of a breakdown. I think the best thing I can do is to go with Fitzgerald for a month. The Society will give me leave the moment I ask it, and the rest may pull me together. Take Freddy up; we'll follow in a few minutes."

CHAPTER IV.

A PAIR OF FRIENDS.

When Mrs. Manton and the boy had left the room, Fitzgerald rose, lit a cigar, and walked gravely up and down for a few minutes in silence.

Manton turned his chair away from the table, and, with his head drooped upon his chest, his hands thrust deeply into his trousers pockets, and a look of profound dejection on his face, gazed at the ground.

Fitzgerald was the first to speak.

"You will be ready for the mail to-morrow evening, Manton. I suppose you are sure to get the leave?"

"They will not refuse me anything I ask them in reason," said Manton, without looking up.

Fitzgerald took a few more turns up and down the room in silence. Then he said :

"Manton, it would be nonsense for me to pretend that I do not see something is wrong. What is it? I'm the closest friend you have in London. We've been pals for years. Out with it, old man; out with it."

Again Manton spoke without looking up.

"Ay, Fitzgerald, there's no man I'd trust sooner, you know that; but, owing to a circumstance which I will not name, you are the last man in London I should care to tell of my trouble just now."

Fitzgerald paused in his walk, knocked the ashes of his cigar upon a plate, caught the cigar between his thumb and finger, and, holding the red end close up to his face, examined the cigar attentively for a while; then replacing the cigar between his lips, he again began walking up and down.

For many years these two men had been the closest of friends, and the most intimate of confidants. No man tells absolutely everything he thinks to any other man, but anything that either of these men would tell a friend, the one had told the other. Fitzgerald had known Manton in his bachelor days. He had known him when he first fell in love with his wife; he had been the recipient of all his love secrets. He had been—a thing not usual among bachelor friends—an enthusiastic advocate of Manton's marriage. He had always held, and professed, the profoundest admiration and esteem for Manton's wife. He had given them their first wedding gift. He had presented their infant son and heir with a coral-and-bells, long before that mite of humanity possessed enough of the knowledge of good and evil to put this toy to its proper use. He had always been a welcome guest at their house, and honoured above all others. He was one of Manton's sureties to the New Building Society, of which Manton was the secretary. For, although he was only a poor man, he had always had a small property in Ireland, which made him a good mark for the sum named in Manton's bond to the Society. He knew what Manton's income was. And now, here was he, at the very moment of the death of his morose and repellent old grand-uncle, of his inheriting a property which, to him, was a small fortune, sht out from the confidence of the friend whose sympathy and participation in his good luck he most desired.

Fitzgerald was sorely puzzled, and not a little pained. He felt a great inclination to take his friend by the shoulder, shake him up, and ask what the deuce it all meant. But, somehow, his better judgment told him that no good would come of this. He felt exceedingly sorry for Mrs. Manton, and sorry also that it should so happen he was present when what was, he felt sure, the only cloud of their married life had passed over them. What could it be? How was it possible that the name of Clonmore could have had such an influence upon George? He had often told his friend that one day or other, if he lived longer than his grand-uncle, he should succeed to the property of which the old man was tenant-for-life. But he distinctly remembered that he had never told George the name of the town near which the property was situated, but had contented himself with saying that it lay in a fertile part of southern Tipperary.

Having continued his walk up and down the room for a minute, he paused once more at the table opposite where Manton sat.

"George," he said, "you are coming with me for a holiday, which I know you need. There is something on your mind which is hurting it and you. Will you not tell me before we start? I am sure that if you carry this secret with you while you are away, your trip will do you no good. Be a man and tell me what it is."

At last, Manton raised his head and smiled, this time with not so much apparent effort as before.

"You are exaggerating the matter, Fitzgerald," said he. "I assure you, if you knew

what it was, you, of all my friends, would make light of it."

"I, of all your friends, make light of it!" cried Fitzgerald, in grave surprise. "I, of all your friends, make light of your trouble! This is the first time you ever accused me, George, of being disloyal."

"Disloyal!" This time Manton smiled naturally. "I own I have a little trouble, but it has not yet turned my brain, and until I am mad how could I think you disloyal?"

"But you would trust me if you did not think I would divulge or betray?"

"I am sure," said Manton, "you are incapable of divulging or betraying anything I might ask you to keep to yourself. But in this matter you are the last friend I have whom I would care knew this. Let us drop the subject. I will go with you most gladly to-morrow, and you shall do with me in your own country what you will. But you must promise me before we set out, you must promise me now, that you will not re-open this subject to me until I do to you. Is it a bargain?"

"If it is to be a bargain it will be a hard bargain. I think I, too, am entitled to make a condition before we set out. Do you agree?"

"I think I may safely say, I do."

"You will not go away from home, George, and leave a mystery behind you. I know you too well to think this secret is one you cannot tell your wife, although you will not tell your friend."

This time Manton laughed.

"I promise you that, any way," he said. "She shall know it to-night."

"Then it is a bargain. Let us shake hands."

The two men shook hands cordially, and looked into one another's eyes with affection and confidence.

"Now, let's get upstairs," said Fitzgerald, "or Mrs. Manton may think we are writhing in one another's gore."

When the two men reached the little drawing-room the boy had gone to bed, and Mrs. Manton was sitting alone. She was slightly paler than usual, and as the men came in she looked up with a nervous flutter of her eyelids.

Fitzgerald thought to himself that nothing more could be done by him here to-night, and that the sooner Mrs. Manton knew this secret the better, and that the sooner he went away the sooner she would 'know it'. He said, in his most light and joyous way:

"I hope you are not nervous, Mrs. Manton, at the idea of your husband coming over to our wild country with me. I once knew a cavalry man, whose fellow-officer was ordered to Ireland, and who, having a firm conviction that country was still a good way behind the age, and fearing that his friend might suffer from wants of the most primitive kind, offered to give the man under orders the address of a firm which supplied excellent tinned meats, as he had an unpleasant suspicion flesh meat could not be easily obtained over the way."

Mrs. Manton smiled, and looked up.

"I'm not afraid of trusting George with you," she said.

"What?" he cried, in mock surprise; "not even into Tipperary?"

Manton stepped behind his wife's chair, and, placing his hand affectionately upon her shoulder, said:

"Helen has enough sense to know that men are to you what you are to them. It is a great pity that everyone is not as wise as Helen in this matter. Will you call here to-morrow, Fitzgerald? and we can drive from this to Euston."

"Certainly," said the Irishman, adding. "I must be off now. I have more things to do in the way of packing and leave-taking, than, George, are dreamt of in your philosophy."

In the same light manner, he bade his host and hostess good night, ran down the stairs, hummed a lively tune, and closed the front door after him.

Husband and wife were now alone.

(To be continued.)

FOR LOVE—OR GOLD?

A SHORT STORY.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

BY MRS. H. G. SOMERVILLE.

with a demure look at her vis-à-vis which excites the risible muscles of his mouth.

He, the said vis-à-vis, is a tall, well-built man of thirty, with a pleasant, attractive face, whose chief adornment consists of a brown, silky beard, and moustache twisted à la Napoleon—Sir Marcus Percival by name.

"Not to the past, but to the future, looks true nobility," he quotes wickedly, aiding and abetting her propensity to quiz the self-made man, whose skin is inordinately thin where his own interests are concerned.

"Oh, well! I am thankful I live at the tail-end of a race instead of at the beginning. I am sure one ought to be, when one remembers the sort of marriage blessing that was considered the correct thing in the old patriarchal times. 'Be thou the mother of thousands of millions,' indeed! I should have felt tempted to retort—as my rude little brother Tom used—'Mother of millions yourself!'"

The Honourable Charles walks off laughing. He has seen the groom who brings the evening post-bag descending the long flight of steps which leads from the terrace on which the Priory is built. Unlocking it, he distributes its contents amongst the party, for most of those in this part of the grounds are guests staying in the house. There is a packet for Richard May; who opens it—without so much as "by your leave"—where he stands, on the other side of the little table.

It proves to be some advertising circulars of a lottery just being started in Paris, with prizes of extraordinary value.

"Quite a genuine thing," declares Mr. May, handing one to her ladyship, who lazily passes it over to Sir Marcus to read to her. "My correspondent knows I never go in for anything that is not safe," continues May; "if there were any doubt about this, he would not have wasted stamps on its postage. I shall take a few numbers myself—fifty or so."

"And, on the principle that money always goes to money, win the great prize yourself, eh? You might stand out this time, and let us poor beggars have a chance. I should not object to the five thou. myself!"

Richard May knows—no one better—how true that is, and how acceptable would be the identical sum mentioned to the baronet at the present time, to enable him to pay off the mortgage on his paternal estate effected by his spendthrift father years before, which, in spite of his own most strenuous exertions, remains unpaid, and the foreclosure of which is threatened, the original deed having passed into other hands from the lapse of time, and the present holder being "in want of money," according to his lawyer's letter.

RICHARD MAY IN WANT OF MONEY? But the baronet is ignorant of the cognomen of the individual who has power to foreclose, so that the statement passes unquestioned.

"Why not try your luck, Sir Marcus? You might win something, even if you lost the big one. Lady Barbara, won't you take one, too?"

"I don't mind if I do," she says, carelessly. A few thousands more or less make little difference to her. "What is the price of a ticket?" Then she catches sight of Margaret Leslie, and attracts her notice in the words of our opening speech.

The new comer is of middle height, has an admirably proportioned figure, and a face of such classic purity of outline and colouring as to bear favourable comparison with the acknowledged beauties of the day.

Her costume is of the simplest—only white muslin over black silk; but, plain as it looks beside Lady Barbara's magnificent robe of mauve gros de Naples, it has a quiet elegance of its own which amply compensates for a lack of splendour. The bonnets of both ladies, worn in the style of 1872, off the head, display the golden-brown tresses of the one and the jetty locks of the other, whose piquant, sunny face, with its tiny nez retroussé, pouting cherry lips, and well-defined eyebrows, is eagerly turned towards her friend.

"Make my fortune, Lady Barbara? Yes, I should like to do it, if you can show me how,"



["HERE'S A CHANCE FOR YOU, MARGARET!"]

and a whole row of pearls gleam between the ruby setting of her lips, as she smiles.

"Read this, Miss Leslie. It will direct you to the rapid road to wealth," says Sir Marcus, offering her the lottery bill, which she half hesitates to take, suspecting that there is some trick connected therewith, for which she knows Lady Barbara would be to blame. With a puzzled look she glances from one to other of the gentlemen without getting much assistance from either. Sir Marcus sits, regardless of manners, quietly regarding her, the bill extended in his right hand; while Richard May stands with one hand thrust savagely into his trousers pocket, his eyeglass in his eye, and a sullen look lowering over his features, apparently deep in his copy of the circular.

She reads the signs of annoyance on his face only too plainly, and is troubled. "What has she done to anger him now?" she asks herself, with a heart-sick feeling of fear. He is her master, is Richard May, and already he makes her feel the pressure of his authority. They have been engaged a few months; ever since then he has shown the most frightful jealousy if she do but speak civilly to one of the opposite sex. But more especially is he jealous of the baronet. Perhaps he has cause.

How does it come to pass that she is engaged to such a man?

It is the old story of what wealth can do.

Her father, the Very Reverend the Dean, is of high descent, but poor—very poor—and Margaret, his only child, must marry for money; she has birth enough for two, he determines. So as she grows to years of discretion, cold water is thrown upon her penchant for Marcus Percival, her early playmate and friend, and she has pointed out to her the utter folly of love-matches unsupported by a proper supply of that commodity which oils the wheels of life's chariot, and without which they are apt to "go heavily."

She pays but little heed to all these worldly-wise maxims, however, until the old baronet dies, for deep down in her heart of hearts is a

secret—a cherished conviction that Marcus loves her, and will speak at the right time. She knows that he is poor—knows, too, that her father will not consent for years, if he ever does; but she is willing to wait any length of time if only she have the sweet consciousness of his answering affection for her to support and sustain her.

At the old man's death she is, alas! undeviated. Immediately after it Sir Marcus goes abroad, and Lady Percival, his mother, tells her significantly that it is not his intention to return for a long period, nor to marry until the mortgage is redeemed.

"Which will not be for many years, if at all!" Marcus is so proud. "He will owe nothing to his wife," he says, or he could marry and pay it off to-morrow. There are many girls with money who would be only too glad to have him, poor as he is!" she says, with a desponding sigh.

Then Margaret begins to despair; and when a year, two years, glide away into the unrecallable past, and he still makes no sign, she no longer turns a deaf ear to her father's solicitations in favour of Richard May, and when that gentleman himself makes her an offer, she accepts as quietly and calmly as if she were merely selecting a new dress for a season's wearing, rather than a companion for life!

Sir Marcus returns in the following July, and it is in August, at the Priory, she meets him for the first time after his long absence. They are both invited for a stay of some weeks, while Richard May will go and come as he pleases for the period of her visit.

He does not talk of getting married just yet, for he "has not yet met with a place to suit him," he tells people, when they ask "when he thinks of settling down?" At which Margaret is by no means distressed.

"It won't bite, Miss Leslie," laughs the baronet, at length. "Shall I read it for you, as you seem disinclined to touch it?"

"What nonsense, Margaret!" breaks in May, before she can reply. "Can't you read it for

yourself, without troubling Sir Marcus? If you would like a ticket," he adds, more graciously, "I shall be happy to give you one."

"Thank you," she says, with chilling hauteur, "I should prefer to purchase one for myself! How is the affair managed? Oh, I see! Then the earlier we select our numbers, the more likely we are to secure them. Lady Barbara, have you chosen? No! Well, you set the example, and we will follow it. It is like that game, 'Think of a number,' that we used to play. Which will you have? Sir Marcus, suppose you take down the numbers chosen and write for them?" she cries, in a sudden access of excitement, deliberately ignoring May's wrathful looks.

"With the greatest possible pleasure, Marg—Miss Leslie," he replies, eagerly; and with his pocket-book before him, he is soon jotting down their several selections.

"Shall we have more than one each? No. I think it is wiser not. I have staked my life upon a cast, and I will stand the hazard of the die!" You, Lady Barbara, select the fifteenth number of the fourth column on the second page. Your number is 025041. Miss Leslie, the seventh number of the ninth column—your number is 09016. I will have the tenth of the eleventh column on the third page, 009016. How strange there is only the difference of a naught between yours and mine! Let us hope it will be a toss-up between us for the first and second prizes."

She laughs gaily in reply.

"When will it be drawn?"

"The end of this month, it says. We ought to hear about the 1st. Unfortunate that, rather. The suspense will spoil my aim for the birds!" with a pretence of dismay at the thought.

"So much the better for the birds. But that is ridiculous. I do not suppose anything could spoil your aim."

"Which is all she knows about it," thinks Sir Marcus to himself, as she moves gracefully away, his eyes following her regretfully across

the parterre, an overpowering sense of loss welling up within him as he remembers that she is no longer "fair for him;" and the sad wail of the lover in "Locksley Hall" rings in his ears with deeper pathos than ever before—

"Oh, my Amy—mine no more!"

and he well-nigh curses himself for his folly in letting her go out of his life.

He had not thought his love for her was so deep. The separation of years had not shown him the true nature of his feelings; but directly he came home and saw her, so fair, so sweet, so womanly—saw her, moreover, the promised wife of another, his heart awoke to recognize her as its empress, and to mourn his irreparable loss.

The tickets are sent for, and arrive in due course; but others of the guests are not so successful in obtaining the various numbers they select, owing to their being less prompt in sending for them.

Mr. May has his fifty at a guinea each, and several gentlemen of a sporting turn have also speculated as largely as they are permitted to do by the rules of the lottery; and altogether there is considerable excitement as to the result of the drawing animating the Priory circle as the eventful day draws near.

Arrangements are being made for a grand batteau on the 1st of September, when a large accession to the ranks of the gentlemen will arrive from all parts of the country. It is settled that they are to start at an early hour for the coverts, and, after some hours' hard work, are to be joined by the ladies, who will bring the luncheon with them.

The slaughter of the innocents is to be again resumed at three, when some of the womenfolk will return. The majority will remain to drive home with the guns.

"The official report of the drawing will be published on the 2nd, Reggie Vane tells me," Sir Marcus informs his hostess and Margaret, one afternoon late in August, as they sit in a darkened room, vainly endeavouring to keep cool. "Did I tell you he is in Paris?" He has very kindly offered to send me a telegram directly the drawing for the big prize takes place. It seems he knows one of the drawers, and can get the information hours before it is publicly declared; so that we shall know it almost as soon as it is drawn. But we must keep it to ourselves till the next morning, as it will not do to let everybody into the secret, for fear of getting Reggie's friend into hot water. What's your number, Miss Leslie? 09016, is it not? And mine is 09016. Wonderful memory, have I not, to remember so many naughts and nines so long?"

Margaret's laugh rings out mockingly.

"Wonderful, indeed! Why, you have transposed your number and given it to me, and taken mine to yourself. It will not do to trust to your powers of recollection."

"Have I, really? Are you sure you are right? I could have sworn that I had them correctly."

"Look at your pocket-book. You took them down in that."

"I can't, for I tore out the leaf and sent it to Reggie to prevent all danger of mistake. But I will get my ticket."

Leaving the room for a few moments, he returns with a small leather papetière in his hand, which opens with a spring, the secret of which he explains, as it is rather a curiosity, to both ladies, before producing the slip of dimly yellow paper from within which bears stamped upon it the magic character which he hopes will bring fortune to him.

"There, what did I say?—09016. There it is as large as life."

"Why, I declare you have forgotten already what you DID say! That was the number you ascribed to me, and even then you did not quote it correctly. You gave it as 106."

"Did I really?" he says, vaguely, replacing it in the case, and closing the latter carefully. "Well, thank goodness, my forgetting or remembering will make no difference in the end. I cannot make out why you should be so much

more dependable in this matter. I do not usually forget things."

"Oh, this is quite excusable, I think. A lot of figures like that would puzzle anyone. I should not try to remember mine," remarks Lady Barbara, oblivious of the fact that the money is not a feather's weight in the sole of her thoughts, while to these two it means so much.

Not that Margaret wants it for herself. On the contrary, she has a feverishly eager desire that it shall fall to his lot, for she knows from a few words he drops how much it will do for him. Her life is settled. Nothing can alter it now. But she would give—what would she not give, to help him if she could?

A strange unrest seizes upon her at this time—a restless desire to know the result of the lottery, which brings a hectic flush to the ivory cheek and a fire into the hazel eyes, that makes her wondrous fair to look upon in those days of waiting.

Fortunately for her Richard May is absent, and will be absent until the 2nd of September, on business connected with some gold mines which have lately absorbed his time and energies; so that they are halcyon days for Margaret and Sir Marcus, these later ones in August.

Not that either of them condescends to a flirtation. They are both superior to such a vulgarity. But they do enjoy each other's society in a quietly happy way, enhanced perhaps by the deep sadness with which they realize the impossibility of another such golden period for them, which is touching to contemplate, and which goes straight to the heart of Lady Barbara, and makes her feel she could do anything to reunite such a pathetically interesting pair of lovers.

The 1st dawns bright and clear, with every promise of a remarkably fine day, and by ten o'clock the shooting party have made themselves scarce.

There has been much banter at the unusually early breakfast, at which there has been a remarkable muster of ladies, avert the forthcoming sport; and some very broad hints are given to sundry members of the party to avoid the vicinity of sundry others of a pronounced cockney type and get-up generally—to whom the Honourable Mr. Melville has had to do the civil (for reasons political chiefly) by "requesting the pleasure of their company for a few days' shooting"—on the ground that they are "such DEAD SHOTS!"

"Whatever you do, Gordon, don't get behind that little cad who rejoices in the distinguished patronymic of Jones," says a young sprig of nobility, who prides himself on his unerring aim and skill in bringing down his bird on the wing, in a dogmatic tone to his still younger brother, who joins the guns for the first time in his life-to-day, and to whom he is imparting various valuable hints for his guidance from the storehouse of his two seasons' experience. "Give you my word, dear boy, Judd, the keeper, was positively in terror last year every time he got ahead of us. Beg pardon, sir, but would you mind not going on so fast? It frightens the birds, you see, he kept saying to him, every time the animal got ten inches beyond a given line; and when I remonstrated, pointing out that it was surely better to let him blaze away inflectually in front than run the risk of being ourselves shot, he winked ferociously at me, whispering behind his big brown hand that it was of our lives he was thinking, 'for if you'll notice, my lord, he shoots nothing in front of him!' "

A roar of laughter from those who heard it followed this sally, and someone attempted to disparage its credibility, very much to the annoyance of the narrator, who turned to Margaret Leslie to confirm the truth of his story.

"Was it not exactly as I have related it, Miss Leslie? You were there—" he begins, but she has moved off, too deep in what Sir Marcus is saying to heed anyone else.

He, Sir Marcus, is asking her to do him the favour of bringing the telegram from Paris with

her to the covert side if it arrives before she starts.

"Very likely it will," he says. "Who will be the winner, I wonder?"

"Let us hope it may fall to your share, Sir Marcus," she says, softly.

He shakes his head dubiously.

"I fear I am not one of the fortunate ones of the earth—"

"Saint heart—" she begins gaily enough, but stops in unutterable confusion, a scarlet blush mantling cheek and brow as she realizes what she is saying.

"Never won fair lady," finished Sir Marcus for her. "I thank you, Miss Leslie, for the words. I take them as an omen for good," he adds, lightly, yet significantly, as he jumps into the carriage awaiting him at the foot of the terrace steps.

At twelve o'clock the ladies start to join their husbands, brothers, and lovers, and Margaret has to take her place in one of the carriages without the precious telegram, which has not yet arrived; but to her delight at the lodge gate she sees the mounted messenger who brings it, so that she is able to wave it triumphantly at Sir Marcus as he comes to her side of the carriage.

"One moment," he says, leading her to a sheltered nook and spreading a thick rug for her to sit upon, before tearing open the yellow despatch from E. Vane to Sir Marcus Percival.

"Naught, mine, naught, one, six, wins the five thousand pounds," he reads therefrom. "Hurrah! Miss Leslie, it is your number! A thousand congratulations on your 'bon fortune,'" and he shakes her hand effusively.

The girl's face pale and flushed in quick succession as she hears the number read out.

"You are making a mistake again," she says, hesitatingly. "That is your number, Sir Marcus, I think—"

"Why, Miss Leslie, you knew them by heart a day or two ago. Have you forgotten them now?" and he looks at her surprised.

"I must have," she answers, with the same strange hesitancy, which has such fatal significance for him later on, and with a forced laugh which has no merriment in it. "But we can easily settle the question. Where is your ticket?"

"Where you saw it the other day. I have not touched it since. Where is yours?"

"At home," she replies, looking him full in the face, with no sign of flinching about her; but for all that it is false.

For the first time in her life she has lied to him.

"After all, then, we must wait till the evening to be certain about it. We might as well have waited for the official list," he remarks, in a disappointed tone.

"I am sorry I have been so stupid as to forget," she says, apologetically.

"Oh! it does not matter, of course," is his somewhat lofty answer.

But he cannot disguise his annoyance, try how he may; and the luncheon hour is spoilt for them in consequence. Later on he grows ashamed of his petulance, and does all he can to obliterate the remembrance of it from her mind—with only partial success, however, for the girl remains silent and preoccupied until it is time for them to part.

"You will drive home with me, will you not?" he whispers, as he takes his gun from the keeper's hand.

"I cannot. I must return now," is the reply.

"Nonsense, Margaret! What is to necessitate your return with the old people? You are not afraid of the evening air, I know," cried Lady Barbara, overhearing her.

"I MUST go, dear. Please do not hinder me," is the earnest reply she gets, so that there is nothing for it but to let her have her way.

Accordingly, Sir Marcus puts her with sulky dignity into a pony-chaise beside a toothless old dowager, who forms an admirable foil to Miss Leslie's fresh, youthful bloom.

"Au revoir! till dinner," he says, with a

sweeping bow to both ladies, as the younger whips up her ponies and drives off.

Scarcely have they got over a mile of their journey, however, ere he has changed his mind about remaining longer with the sportsmen. All seems so "flat, stale, and unprofitable" without Margaret. He will go home and make his peace with her. She was vexed by his foolish display of temper at luncheon, and no wonder. To spoil their last day together for such a trifle! Richard May comes back to-morrow. Well, the evening shall make amends! And with this determination he starts to walk back to the Priory.

At the rate at which he strides along it does not take him long to accomplish this feat, and within an hour after the riders he is passing into the Priory gates. Going up the staircase he overtakes a gentleman, Richard May, who shakes hands with him before turning into his rooms.

"Back sooner than you thought," remarks the baronet, with an anathema at his own late stupidity in spoiling the few precious hours that remained to Margaret and himself.

"One day. Is everybody well?"

Then he shuts the door behind him, while Sir Marcus passes on to his apartments further down the long corridor.

The suite apportioned to his use consists of three rooms, a sitting-room and bedroom with small dressing-room beyond. The two first, besides communicating with each other, have doors opening into the corridor. The bedroom door is the first he reaches, and at it he turns in.

Being tired and fatigued, his movements are slow and languid, and the first thing he does is to take off his heavy shooting boots and replace them with noiseless embroidered slippers. The door leading into the sitting-room is slightly ajar, and as he is in the act of taking down a lounging coat from the wardrobe he hears a step enter from the corridor and cross it stealthily to the door of the bedroom. Acting on the impulse of the moment, he steps to the right of the massive wardrobe, where he is completely hidden, while the unknown visitant takes a momentary survey, and then moves away, as he hears by the footsteps, to the writing-table near the window. Curious as to the identity of the intruder, and yet not desirous of bringing confusion and it may be dismissal, upon some giddy young housemaid who possibly has a design on his scent bottles, of which he has a profusion, he creeps silently to the door of communication between the rooms, and, taking good care to screen himself, glances through. The shock of the discovery he makes is almost too much for his self-command.

Standing at the table, her back towards him, bending over the leather papetière which lies open before her, is Margaret Leslie, in the act of removing the lottery ticket which she finds within it, and which she thrusts into the bosom of her dress, replacing it with another—her own—which she extracts from her purse, and the number of which she glances over—great as is her haste—before finally closing with a sharp click the lock of the case. When he looks up again she has gone.

Throwing himself on a couch, he attempts to solve the mystery, but in vain.

"Why should she change the tickets? Hers was the winning number; what more did she desire? Was it the winning number? She had denied that it was hers—had said that it was his. Did she—was she making sure of the prize? Heavens! What a thought in connection with Margaret Leslie! No, he would never think such evil of her. It was very mysterious, but he would trust her in spite of appearances."

But the black doubts came back, do what he would to prevent them, and the evening proved a failure for him.

When he met her previous to going in to dinner she appeared to have quite recovered her spirits, and was brimming over with fun and mischief, and was altogether more like the Margaret he had known in the days of old than he remembered her since his return. Not even the cold douche of Richard May's unexpected ap-

pearance at the meal could repress the exuberance of her spirits, nor the marked splendour of his greeting and subsequent demeanour extinguish the gleeful light of her eyes.

"One would think she had done some extraordinarily good deed," was the reflection of the baronet as he watched her form afar, growing the more perplexed the more he thought over it.

The next morning's post brought the official gazette, which published the list of winners. It was received at the morning's meal amid great excitement.

Richard May read it out:

"The five thousand had been won by No. 009016. Anybody got it?" he asks, looking carelessly round him. "It is not one of mine."

"What number did you say?"

The question is asked by Margaret Leslie, but in such a strained, unnatural voice that few recognize it for hers.

"What number?" she repeats, her face an awful white, a spot of vivid scarlet literally blazing on either cheek, and her great eyes stony with dread. "What number?"

Then, as he repeats with slow emphasis, "009016," she gives one gasping cry and sinks lifeless to the ground.

"Why, it is Miss Leslie's own number!" is the united chorus, after she has been attended to, and is lying down in her own room. For they have picked up the ticket she dropped when she fell, and it corresponds with the printed number of the prize. Later on they are cordial in their congratulations, but she takes their kind speeches very apathetically, as if her good fortune were her sorrow rather than her pleasure.

Sir Marcus meets her with marked coldness, and without a single congratulatory expression. There is an avoidance in his manner which pains her, and once, when they are alone on the terrace, she makes a remark to that effect.

"What did you expect from me, Miss Leslie?" he retorts, in a strangely sarcastic tone; "please at your success, or at the means taken to insure it?"

Then he walks away to where the lights shine out from the smoking-room on the starlit darkness of the night. Her face, as she looks after his retreating figure, grows paler with an unknown terror. Can he know aught? Impossible! Was he not miles away when she changed the tickets?

But the few lines awaiting her on her toilet-table when she seeks her room enlighten her as to the impossibility of her having been seen. They are from Richard May, and are unmistakably clear in their meaning:

"DEAR MISS LESLIE.—Permit me to withdraw from the honour of ascribing to your hand. My blood may not be as blue as your own, but I have sufficient pride to decline alliance with a lady who has so little sense of honour as to grant an appointment in his own rooms to one gentleman while under a marriage engagement to another. Less than the evidence of my own eyes I should not have believed where you were concerned. Unfortunately, there can be no possibility of doubt, as I saw and spoke to Sir M. some ten minutes previous to seeing you leave the suite of rooms into which I had seen him enter, and which I have since ascertained are his. For your father's sake, I desire that the true cause of our rupture be withheld. Lay the whole blame on me, if you will, as any statement you decide to adopt will be sustained by, madam."

"Yours with all possible respect,
RICHARD GEORGE MAY."

Poor girl! She grew sick at heart as she read it. "In the power of both," she thought, "and yet without having achieved my end. What SHALL I do?"

Lady Barbara comes to Sir Marcus with a face of deep concern on the morrow. "Margaret is ill," she tells him; but he seems undisturbed by the news.

"I wish you would help me, Sir Marcus. It is a most awkward affair, and I don't know what to do. If I were not sure that I may place absolute reliance on your honour——"

"Is it necessary for me to say you may, Lady Barbara?"

"It concerns you, too, or I should not speak. Richard May has broken with her."

"On what grounds?"

"That she gave you an interview in your rooms on Tuesday. This is the reason given in his letter to her, which she has shown me, but declines to explain. It CANNOT be true?"

"It is. At least, it is the fact that she came to my sitting-room; but it was without my consent, and under the impression that I was out shooting. As it happened, I had walked back, and was in my bedroom at the time."

"What possible occasion was there for her to do such an indiscreet thing?" says her ladyship, with asperity.

"You will hardly believe it, if I tell you. But it is safe with you—and, under the circumstances, I had better speak than allow worse to be inferred."

"Decidedly."

"SHE CAME TO CHANGE HER LOTTERY TICKET FOR MINE. You remember she brought the telegram which told us the winning number?"

"And after you had opened it, you could not agree as to whose number it was, after all. You came and told me at luncheon. Why did she change them?"

"Do you not see? She was determined to win; and, mine being the number given in the telegram, she came home, and on the assumption, I suppose, lifting his eyebrows scornfully, "that exchange is no robbery——"

"Oh, Sir Marcus! Not Margaret!" in tones of deepest distress. "There is some strange coil here—but not THAT!"

"I should be glad of any other solution—but she won, if you remember."

"True; but I am sure it can be explained. I shall ask her."

And she did, at once. But Margaret could only sob pitifully, and declare her innocence of any intention to steal the prize from him.

"The telegram gave my number, and I knew he wanted it so much more than I did—so I changed the tickets that afternoon, thinking he would never know. Then, when it was read out from the paper the next morning, I found that the telegram must have been wrong, for it corresponded with the number on the ticket I had taken from his case, and not with that given in the message. I thought I should have died when I knew I had failed—and I wish I had, now that HE thinks so contemptibly of me!" and the sobs grow more pathetic in their intensity.

"Where is the telegram?" asks Lady Barbara, suddenly, after vainly endeavouring to pierce the mystery, by questions and suggestions which neither Sir Marcus nor Margaret find bring the solution any nearer.

It is not to be found, she is told.

"It would make everything plain at once," says Margaret, "but Sir Marcus has lost it, I fear. Oh! I wish it could be traced! He would be sorry for his cruelty then!"—her eyes swimming, for the baronet has been strangely severe in his animadversions on her conduct, refusing with scorn to credit the goodness of her intention in the affair, and yet at the same time rejecting positively her offer to refund the money of which she deprived him.

On Saturday morning she sees him leave with the party for the coverts, about nine o'clock; and knows he will not return till late, to dinner. On Monday his visit will be over, Lady Barbara says; only one day for them to make it up, if they ever are to do so. But what can she do? Nothing, while he thinks her guilty—GUILTY! Oh, heaven! that it should be possible for him to think so! and she covers her face with her transparent blue-veined hands, and writhes in anguish of spirit.

She is in the music-room, where she has been since she saw him depart—the flight of time unheeded, alone with her misery.

"Oh, Marcus, my love! my darling! Why will you not believe me?" she cries aloud, in her deep distress.

A slight sound startles her. She looks hastily up, and sees him standing near her, a mingled

expression of shame and love on his features, in his hand a pink telegram.

"Miss Leslie—I have to ask—your forgiveness!" he says, disjointedly, his tones husky with emotion. "The telegram—I found it where we sat on Tuesday. Oh, Margaret, my precious! forgive me, that I dared to doubt you!"

Then she is drawn unresistingly to the shelter of his embrace, and her tears cease to fall, under the softer shower of his kisses.

THE READER'S BOOK-MARKER.

IN A FRENCH POLICE-COURT.

We translate from the French the following amusing stories:

Most of the Parisian houses have balconies. The Parisienne is thereby enabled to enjoy life constantly in the open air. There is not a great lady or a lorette who has not her hanging gardens, like Semiramis. How charming it is to embroider, to work, to read, to look out, and to be looked at on a balcony!

It was on a balcony that M. Onisoie had placed the kennel of his dog Kingdom. This dog was of English breed—it's name attests it.

"Madame Moussillon," said M. Onisoie to his portress on starting for London, "I leave my dog in your charge. I shall be a month away; it weighs a pound and a half; if on my return it has increased in weight a single drachm, if its breath is tainted, you shall not have a single sou; but if it has preserved its perfume and its small size, I shall make you a present of fifty francs. So let it have no meat, no bones; only bread, nothing but bread, and you shall be rewarded, and, more than that, I will bless you!"

"All right," said I to myself" (Madame Moussillon is addressing the court), "if your dog gets fat he will be clever fellow, so, monsieur le president, I went up every day to see 'Chien d'homme,' and I took him a little water, nothing but water, but on the Tuesdays and Saturdays I took him a halfpennyworth of bread. Yet notwithstanding these precautions, what did the brute of a dog do, but get as fat as the Porthos of M. Alexandre Dumas, and his breath was pestiferous as ten thousand men."

"This is not natural," said I to myself, so I stopped the allowance of bread; but lo! he continued to fatten till he looked dropsical and his breath grew worse and worse. I took counsel upon the matter with my good man, who said to me, 'There's something under this.' He was mistaken; it was above, not under it. A countryman of 'Chien d'homme's' lived in the balcony above; I examined the kennel, and what did I find in it? Seventeen bones of legs of mutton, that madame, milady, had treated this beast of a dog with. Is it not disgusting thus to throw away the food of the poor? I accordingly spoke my mind to this corrupter of dogs, and she replied to me, 'Ooh! pourquoi vous faire périr dogue de faim?'

"When she answered me thus, I had, unfortunately, my house-broom in my hand, and I was so indignant that I allowed myself to break one of her teeth with it—only one, I assure you. I ask for a hundred francs damages, because not only M. Onisoie did not give me the fifty francs, but he left the house, and the landlord dismissed me from my situation as portress."

Madame Wilson explained to the court, how, hearing poor Kingdom howl with hunger all day and all night, she took pity on the dog and threw it a stray bone. She then detailed the violence to which she had been subjected on the part of Madame Moussillon, and produced a medical certificate in proof of the mischief that had been done to her.

Monsieur le President to Madame Moussillon: To sum up, what do you complain of?

"I complain, I complain," replied the concierge, "that madame did me an injury by throwing over her bones upon the balcony of 'Chien d'homme.' I ask a hundred francs damages."

The court dismissed the accused, Madame Wilson, and condemned Madame Moussillon to eight days' imprisonment for acts of violence.

Madame Moussillon: What! eight days' imprisonment for damages! Well, that is pretty! Who would take care of another person's dog?

The sketch that follows, taken from the same fruitful repository, is one that may be truly said to exhibit maternal love carried to excess.

M. le President: Widow Trottin, you are accused of being a swindler; you have had upwards of 6000 francs of goods supplied to you, deceiving the tradespeople by false promises.

The Accused: Sir, my excuse lies in my profession; I am a mother.

M. le President: Do you call that a profession?

The Accused: Sir, the depths of a mother's heart can never be measured.

M. le President: That is not the question. You have had 250 francs worth of charcoal supplied to you.

The Accused: My children were cold, monsieur le president.

M. le President: You owe 570 francs to the butcher for meat.

The Accused: They were hungry.

M. le President: But I find, also, the accounts of two dealers in umbrellas and parasols; you have had 150 francs of umbrellas, and 180 francs of parasols. You will tell me, no doubt, it was to shelter your children from the rain and the sun; in such a case your maternal solicitude must have been slightly exaggerated.

The Accused: The heart of a mother is an abyss. The depths of the ocean have been sounded; they will never find the bottom of my heart.

M. le President: I find another account for 220 francs worth of the "History of Tom Thumb."

The Accused: It is such an amusing work.

M. le President: But I find also 157 francs' worth of ices, and 48 francs' worth of punch à la romaine, expended in a week.

The Accused: Poor little things. It gladdened their hearts. Ah! I am another Cornelia; my children are my treasures, monsieur le president.

M. le President: Your children! your children! Why, then, did you carry the greater part of this property to the pawnbroker's?

The Accused: It was not me, sir; it was my children's tutor, and that notwithstanding my earnest supplications to the contrary.

M. le President: He seems to have been well chosen, this tutor.

The Accused: Oh, sir, a most distinguished man. But the balls at the Mabile were his ruin.

M. le President: You must feel that such excuses will be of no avail before the court.

The Accused: Men are incapable of judging me. I appeal to all who are mothers.

Notwithstanding this appeal, Widow Trottin was condemned to six months' imprisonment.

On hearing the verdict she raised up both her hands, and exclaimed, sobbing aloud:

"My poor children! When I am in prison, who will be a father to you?"

USEFUL HINTS AND RECIPES.

TO MAKE SULPHUR CRYSTALS.—To do this, melt down roll sulphur in the ladle or crucible, using, however, a very gentle heat, and not prolonging it beyond the point at which the whole of the sulphur is melted; allow to cool in the same manner as with bismuth, wait until a crust has formed over the surface, and then immediately bore two holes through with a red-hot wire, the one for the liquid sulphur to run out, and the other to admit air. Pour out the sulphur still remaining liquid, and cut carefully round the upper crust with a penknife, remove it, and the whole of the interior is interlaced with delicate needle-shaped, amber-like, crystals of sulphur. Here, then, are two substances, of widely different appearances and properties, both possessing in common this property of crystallizing, but with each there is a definite shape. Further experiment and observation teach us that the form of a crystal is as characteristic of body as any other property it possesses.

THE CARE OF THE EYES.—At the recent Sanitary Convention at Ann Arbor, Michigan, Dr. C. J. Lundy, of Detroit, read a paper on "Hygiene in Relation to the Eye," which should have the widest circulation, especially among teachers and school officers. A fruitful source of eye troubles is shown to be the excessive strain upon the muscles and nerves of the eyes due to faulty educational methods, the ill-planned and insufficient lighting of schoolrooms, poor ink and fine print in school books, and other causes, which education might correct. In conclusion, Dr. Lundy lays down the following rules for the better care of the eyes:—1. Avoid reading and study by poor light. 2. Light should come from the side, and not from the back or from the front. 3. Do not read or study while suffering great bodily fatigue or during recovery from illness. 4. Do not read while lying down. 5. Do not use the eyes too long at a time for near work, but give them occasional periods of rest. 6. Reading and study should be done systematically. 7. During study, avoid the stooping position or whatever tends to produce congestion of the head and face. 8. Select well-printed books. 9. Correct errors of refraction with proper glasses. 10. Avoid bad hygienic conditions and the use of alcohol and tobacco. 11. Take sufficient exercise in the open air. 12. Let the physical keep pace with the mental culture, for asthenopia is most usually observed in those who are lacking in physical development.

CAUSES OF FIRES.—A number of the leading insurance companies of London have been trying to discover the causes of fires which occur in dwellings. The "Fireman's Journal" says: "It is estimated that twenty per cent. of such fires are the result of gas or other light coming into contact with curtains or window-blinds. Of course, this proportion applies only to fires. Clothes or other articles drying at fires in stoves or fireplaces are thought to be responsible for sixteen per cent. of the fires which destroy the homes of the people. To defects in stoves, flues, etc., is due about a like percentage. These are the principal causes of fires in private houses, making at least one-half of the whole. Carelessness in one form or another is undoubtedly responsible for at least three-fourths of all fires that occur, be they in dwellings, warehouses, stores, on ships, or in powder-mills."

BURNS AND SCALDS.—A medical writer, speaking of the best remedies for burns and scalds, which are to be procured instantly in most houses, states that oil of turpentine is an excellent application; but this is not always at hand. Vinegar is now generally used in preference to anything else, as it prevents any inflammation taking place, and in some degree heals the wound. Next to this in effect are the strongest spirits that can be procured, as ether, spirits of wine, brandy, etc. These should be applied by means of folded linen cloths to every kind of burn and to scalds, before the skin begins to rise.

THE LONDON WATER COMPANIES.—The total capital of the eight water companies in August, 1881, was £12,536,988; the total money expended on works, £12,612,589; but many of these works have been unproductive, and in the time of the water wars some years ago, three competing set of pipes were sometimes laid in the same street. The total receipts of the water companies in the previous year amounted to £1,534,939, of which the receipts from water rates were £1,515,194. The expenditure for the same period was £1,553,429. Of this there was paid in dividends on share capital, £271,575, and in dividends on loan and preference capital, £150,310. The maintenance and pumping charges were £248,747; salaries, £75,067; and allowance to directors, £22,794.

DREGS AND FROTH.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

BY A. H. WALL.

CHAPTER XXVII. (*continued*).

An hour elapsed before a tremulous, hesitating hand rested lightly on the little bronze knocker, and Ellen, who, like her tired brother, was half asleep, sprang up, crying :

"Was that a knock?"

"No," said Ernest, drowsily. "I didn't hear it."

Ellen, nevertheless, went to the door, and, opening it, saw dark against the dim grey moonlight, half shrinking from her, half supported by the iron railing, the homeless, unhappy visitor they were so anxiously expecting. She sprang forward and wound her arm about her sinking figure.

Her voice was full of loving tenderness as she drew her into the passage, and, closing the door, whispered :

"You have come at last, dear; I am so glad! We have been out all day searching for you. Come in, darling, come in!"

Clara, overcome by emotion, tried in vain to speak. Half led, half carried, she was placed on a cushioned wicker chair beside the fire, which Ernest promptly stirred into a blaze.

Then Ellen saw, with a cry of alarm, that her poor friend had been wounded, that one side of her face was discoloured and swollen.

"You have been hurt, dear?" she asked, solicitously.

Trembling with cold and agitation, Clara looked up at them, and, with tears of grateful feeling in her great, eloquently mournful eyes, replied briefly :

"I had a fall."

And so, tossed on life's stormy ocean, this poor human waif drifted at length into the haven, where calm and rest and watchful love and pity should give her a new existence, with new sources of content and hopefulness. If her poor mother's life had not gone down in the terrible struggle she had endured, Clara felt as if she could almost feel grateful to fate's great, cruel, hungry waves, which had so nearly devoured her, because they had also brought her back to friends so tried and true, so tenderly faithful.

As she rested there on the snugly-cushioned seat and looked languidly around the little room, aglow with such comfortable fire and lamp light, she could hardly persuade herself that she was not awakening from a nightmare's ugly dream; that her dear mother was not still in their room upstairs where Ernest's new lodger was sleeping; that her night in the streets—when the policeman passing her was moved to pity, and, in defiance of his duty, did not "move" her on, but watched her in frequent visits while she slept—was not something utterly imaginary, something that she had read of in a newspaper or a novel, and with such deep emotion that its deeply-impressed image had come back to her in a painful dream.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REST AND SAFETY.

My friend! enough to sorrow you have given,
The purposes of wisdom ask no more.
Be wise and cheerful, and no longer read
The forms of things with an unworthy eye.
She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here.

WORDSWORTH.

No one can appreciate in its luxurious fulness of safety, rest, and comfort, the thankful, happy, delicious feeling, with which Clara Grant crept between the white sheets of Ellen Benny's humble little bed—no one who has not known what it is to endure cold and hunger, a friendless, homeless, outcast in the cruel streets.

The dull, heavy sense of fear, shame, grief, and misery with which she had so painfully

dragged her aching limbs to the door of the artist's little home, seemed to glide away from her in a sorrowful dream as she rested, so pale and motionless, under the white counterpane, like a lily in the snow. God had answered her passionate supplications for support and deliverance; He had guided and guarded her back to the dearest, best, and kindest of faithful friends. Her mother's loving spirit was, she felt, with her still, was still pleading for her at the Throne of Eternal Mercy.

The agonies and struggles of her last greatest calamity were already looked back upon; and, but for that haunting remembrance of her sister Alice, torn away and carried from her in her husband's arms, shrieking and struggling to escape, the languorous sense of peace and content creeping over her would have been perfect. Ah! how strangely still and nice it seemed to rest there so comfortably in the downy softness and warmth, without occasion for the slightest movement, lovingly tended and waited upon, with the tender accents of Ellen's voice in her drowsy ears, and slumber gently closing her gratefully tearful eyes!

"I declare she's fast asleep already, and with her long dark eyelashes wet with tears, poor thing!" said Ellen to her brother, after she had left the room to gravely discuss with him their plans for the future. That over, they kissed, and bade each other good night, and Ellen, weary and stiff with walking, was glad to put out her candle and glide cautiously in beside her soundly sleeping guest.

Clara did not wake until late on the following morning, long after her cheery, active little bedfellow had been up and busy. One of the first things she did was to write to her sister, and inform her of her mother's death and her own unhappy position.

A reply came on the following day. It was in the alderman's handwriting, and ran thus :

"Mr. John Weeldon, in reply to Clara Grant's letter to his wife, requests her to abstain from sending all such very unpleasant communications. He begs, too, that she will not seek an interview which could only be a source of the greatest humiliation, unhappiness, and pain to all concerned. Mrs. Weeldon is now slowly recovering from the shock she experienced; another such a shock would kill her. A ten-pound note in charitably enclosed, to save Clara Grant, if possible, from the streets. If she has any desire to emigrate, and lead a respectable, industrious life abroad, Alderman Weeldon will be only too happy to render her all the assistance in his power."

Clara's returning health and strength soon enabled her to recover the warehouse work; she could once more earn some few shillings a week. Alderman Weeldon's ten-pound note was returned in a blank envelope. The street singer's pride was as resolute as his own.

How delightful it was to sit with Ellen and her brother in the quiet afternoons and evenings, to once more hear the artist's pleasant voice reading to them out of some amusing book or magazine, or in the daily papers, and have that deep sense of present security and content which only a quiet, home-loving woman can thoroughly appreciate!

Though she smiled no more,
She look'd a sadness sweeter than her smile,
As if her heart had deeper thoughts in store
She must not own, but cherished more the while.

"I thought I saw in Ernest Benny's eyes when he looked at you something that was in your father's when first I knew him."

More and more frequently these words, amongst the last Mrs. Grant uttered, came into her daughter Clara's mind, whispering in secrecy and fear a vague, sweet, tremulous something which was not yet hope, from which she shrank affrighted, and yet, with all, her burning heart yearned to embrace and cherish.

She had looked into those frank, earnestly inquiring eyes, timidly and askance, and had seen in them what she thought her mother saw.

No greater contrast could, perhaps, be imagined than that which divided the gentle,

melancholy, wan-faced Clara from the bold, impulsive, light-hearted gaiety of Ellen's character. Each had special charms, and each gained by the other's presence. Clara's feelings were deeper, her thoughts and sentiments more refined and poetical; but the affections of both were strong and true, the hearts of both beat responsive to every noble and elevating influence. The one was thoughtful and quiet, the other's voice was heard in song and harmless frivolous chatter all day long; but each was, in her way, content and happy—Clara was pensively so, Ellen merrily.

It was true that the two girls, now constantly together, had their share of domestic cares and anxieties; but Benny's sister made light of them and was full of fun about them, while the chances of their precarious work kept up a kind of excitement which, as Ellen said, just sufficed to rob life of its dulness and monotony.

If, now and then, the non-arrival of some expected cheque kept them without a meal, when it did come, as Ellen merrily pointed out, their appetites were wonderfully improved; and if the harsh, hungry landlord pressed somewhat threateningly for over-due rent, why, when it was paid they had, she said, the joyous exultation of a very lucky and narrow escape to compensate amply for past anxiety.

If there was a touch of Bohemianism in all this, it was not without its charm; and the cheerful, brave-hearted little sister, who carried sunshine and laughter with her in defiance of all that fate could do or threaten, seemed to have quite a magic power of extracting them from the most gloomily unpromising sources.

Her cheery impulsiveness was like the blowing of a fresh, healthy breeze, clearing away all musty, rusty, unwholesome, and sickly odours, and leaving behind a sense of reinvigoration and refreshment which was truly delightful.

Clara's calm endurance of a sorrow too deep for words had in it a dignity which both Ernest and his sister felt deeply; and if, tempted out by the sunny gaiety of her darling Ellen, the natural buoyancy of Clara's youth and character now and then peeped out, she repressed it, half regretfully, half reproachfully, as if she had forgotten a sternly self-appointed duty.

Ernest was often puzzled to tell why he found two natures so different equally charming and attractive.

And it rested more and more heavily upon the young artist's conscience that he had ever listened to that meddling, mischievous, coarse-minded fellow, at whose brutal suggestion he had driven the Grants away.

And, day by day, there grew up and strengthened within him a more tender regard, and a deeper respect, for the poor girl whose one false step had been so heavily punished, whose love, he said to himself, ought to have been the greatest blessing of that man's life whom the joy of admiring and the happiness of winning could only prompt to ruin and degrade!

They were soon as closely united in loving bonds as if they were members of a single family. Clara was their adopted sister; they were her adopted brother and sister.

The new lodger, too, turned out a most estimable young fellow—gay and light-hearted, and, perhaps, just a little fast, but in no wise seriously objectionable. He was a photographer's assistant—a great admirer of art, of the artist his landlord, and, in his secret heart (as who would not be?), of the artist's pretty little sister.

He often joined them in their walks and talks, and took a turn at the evening readings, and was, altogether, a most desirable addition to the tiny little family circle.

Dick came, and Clara heard from him how both Alice and the alderman had been seeking for her and her mother. Old Mr. and Mrs. Benny came, and Clara declared that Ellen was her dear, good mother's own child. The same in cheerfulness, in goodness, in kindness, and the same in womanly wisdom and thriftiness. And Clara told them that Alderman Weeldon was her brother-in-law; and they told her anecdotes of his boyhood, when he served in

their little shop as Little Black Jacky, and was one of the very best errand-boys they ever had.

"Very clever and quick and very hard-working, but always without much feeling, I'm afraid," said Jemmy.

And then they said how strange it seemed that Clara's sister should have married their shop-boy, and here, so long after, they were all sitting down side by side chatting comfortably together about the same hearth, while the errand-boy had become an alderman and a great man, and while poor little old Jemmy Benny remained just as he was, neither bigger, nor better, nor worse, and, so far as feeling went, not an hour older than he was when that poor little starving creature had come into the little old shop by the Monument and dolefully begged "a piece of bread and a job of work."

"Then he was—down a down, about as low as he could be," said Benny, putting his right hand, and his pipe in it, flat on the heartthrug.

"Amongst the dregs!" interpolated Ernest.

"And now he is," said Benny, standing on tip-toe, and stretching his little figure to its full standing height, with his left hand containing his white-headed glass of ale, raised towards the ceiling.

"Amongst the froth!" laughed Ellen.

One night, when Ellen and Clara were alone in the little parlour, Clara opened her full heart to her darling, and told her all her shame and sorrow, told the whole of her sad history from the time of her earliest remembrance—all the joys of her young and happy life in her grandfather's old home, of their coming to London, of how they first knew Mr. Weeldon, and how he was then a comparatively poor man—the managing clerk of a City firm—of his marriage with her sister, and his wonderfully rapid rise to wealth and fame. Hesitatingly and in broken fragments, with tearful eyes and a flushed face, she told her how she met Captain Montagu and of how wickedly he deceived her, and, throwing her arms about her neck, sobbed out upon her breast the dark confession of her abduction from home, and the horror of her betrayal. She cried in agony:

"If there are any tears hot and bitter enough to wash away the dark stains of a woman's cruel shame, I have shed them. Ellen. But there are none—there are none!"

"I hate him!" cried the artist's sister, fiercely; and then, as full of glowing sympathy and tender pity as she had been of merriment and laughter but a few moments before, she fondled and soothed her poor friend with the wisest of loving words and the most comforting of pious texts.

"When my mother died," said Clara, "it seemed as if every fount of sympathy and pity had been sealed up against my thirsting lips—as if all the world frowned upon me and cast me off; but now—"

"And now here you are, darling, never again to be without a home or a friend so long as God grants us all health and strength to work for one another, or life to love and feel for one another. God be thanked!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

ALDERMAN WEEDON WILL NOT BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEEKS OF SOCIETY.

Stay, gnat, stay, and hear my woe!
She is not mad who kneels to thee;
For what I'm now too well I know,
And what I was, and what should be.
I'll rave no more in proud despair;
My language shall be calm, though sad;
But yet I'll firmly, truly swear
I am not mad! I am not mad!

M. G. LEWIS.

"ILL news flies apace."

There was considerable excitement in sundry circles of society when a rumour spread that Alderman Weeldon's wife, who had long displayed signs of intense melancholy and taciturnity, had suddenly gone raving mad, that she had called some wretched street singer her sister, and had tried to throw herself from her carriage under the wheels of passing vehicles. Numerous were the exclamations of

"How shocking!" and "How awful!" and "What a terrible calamity for the worthy alderman!"

Mr. Weeldon had been astonished at the sight of Clara singing like a beggar in the streets. For, only a few days after he received the note in which she had announced her mother's illness and desired her sister's presence, it had suddenly struck him that they might be in want, and so he had replied to it at his earliest convenience as follows:

"Alderman Weeldon presents his compliments to Miss Clara Grant, and, at her sister's request, encloses his cheque for fifty pounds. He is, at the same time, constrained to add that no further help must be expected, and no interview granted."

He could not at first understand why directly after the receipt of the fifty pounds she should be found in the streets, singing for charity like some miserable, homeless vagrant. This mystery was, however, cleared up when his cheque and letter came back to him through the Dead Letter Office. Then his conscience became troublesome. He said to himself over and over and over again:

"It was not my fault. I couldn't help it. I did all I could for her. How could I know that they had changed their address?"

But the voice of that inward monitor would not be stifled. Night and day he was uncomfortably conscious of Clara's pale, thin suffering face, so woe-begone and haggard looking. Her voice, then so weak and low, once so clear, loud, and bird-like, echoed in his memory. The very song she was singing mingled with the shrieks of his maddened wife struggling and fighting with him in the carriage.

A powerful, resolute female keeper from the nearest lunatic asylum was sent up with Mrs. Weeldon in the upper rooms of the big Kensington house, where the windows were strongly barred, to soothe, restrain, and watch her, lest in the paroxysms of her madness she should do herself some deadly injury.

The physicians in attendance upon the hapless lady shook their wise heads with ominous solemnity. It was, they said, a very curious case and perfectly unaccountable—her strange delusions were so strongly fixed, nothing seemed to shake them. She was alternately plunged into the depths of intense melancholy despair, and so furious in the most ungovernable outbursts of frenzy, that a straight-jacket had been sent for. Now she would implore them to let her go home to her mother and sister, weeping and sobbing in agonized entreaty, and anon she would scold and threaten them with an appeal to the law for depriving her of liberty. She had rejected food, and they talked of compelling her to take nourishment by forcibly removing her front teeth and pouring it into her mouth, and she continued, altogether, in a condition of suicidal dangerous excitement, that they feared her case would become a chronic one of mania, terminating in sudden death.

This idea startled the alderman, and he said to himself:

"How strange! How very strange that I should have suspected this and dreamed of this—of her death, and that splendid alliance! It is a great sorrow for me—she was my first and only love. Perhaps, after all, I am destined to be the founder of a great family."

He confessed to the physicians that recently he had more than once had doubts of his dear wife's sanity. Answering their questions as to her usual demeanour and actions, he was compelled to admit that she had of late been sleepless and unusually irritable, suffering apparently from some form of mental excitement which she kept secret from him, but the nature of which he, after much delay and trouble, had succeeded in discovering. It was altogether imaginary.

Hearing this, the learned men looked at other and nodded, as who should say:

"Just so—precisely so—exactly what we could have foretold!"

He mentioned also how she had driven all over London in search of a supposition sister and mother—of her visiting a private detective office,

and offering money rewards to some of the most loathsome and degraded inhabitants of the lowest back-slums in London—so the alderman put it—for the discovery of these imaginary persons, for, as one of the physicians present and a large number of persons knew well enough (as, indeed, she had herself told many before she became insane), her parents died on their way home from India when she was but a child.

"Like myself," said the alderman, "Mrs. Weeldon has no near relatives now living."

"Has she displayed any striking eccentricities in, say, her dress or manner? Any sudden fluctuations of spirits?" asked the eminent Dr. Frost. "Unaccountable fits of depression, paroxysms of anger, bad dreams, are all pregnant with meaning in a case like the present."

"She has been persistently reserved and melancholy; nearly all my friends have noticed it," said Weeldon.

"Has she complained much of feverish symptoms?"

"She has."

"And headache?"

"Yes."

"Hum! The onset of these attacks is frequently preceded by feverish symptoms which particularly affect the head," said Dr. Brown.

"And you are quite sure, to the best of your knowledge, Mr. Weeldon, that there are no family records which justify a suspicion of hereditary insanity?"

"To the best of my knowledge there are none."

"From a legal point of view," said Dr. Frost to his fellows, oracularly and pomposly, "the main character of insanity is determined by the existence of delusion—that is to say, by the patient believing something to exist which does not exist, as in this case, and who positively acts upon a belief in these delusions, as this most unfortunate lady has acted. Many persons labour for a long time under insane delusions, but, being harmless, they are regarded simply as eccentrics—persons who are actually on certain points insane, but who are still not altogether unfitted for the enjoyment of their liberty and the performance of their social duties. It has been so, if I understand Mr. Weeldon rightly, in this case." Mr. Weeldon nodded. "But when these delusions lead those who are suffering therefrom to injure themselves, or others, in person or property—as I suppose, gentlemen, we are agreed that this poor lady attempted to injure herself, and has wasted, only to some slight extent at present, her husband's property—the law very properly steps in and holds those who, like our friend Mr. Weeldon, are the nearest relatives, responsible for their restraint and safety. Do you follow me, Mr. Weeldon?" Again the alderman nodded. "The symptoms in this case are those of an ordinary attack, for although we have what seemed at first a sudden outburst of mania, it was violent form as the first intimation of the disease; it was actually, as you have heard, preceded by the usual amount and common kind of preceding disorder, mental and bodily."

The upshot of this conference was the combined opinion of the physicians that Mr. Weeldon's proper and most merciful course would be the removal of the patient to an asylum.

At this the alderman seemed greatly moved. He walked the room excitedly.

Dr. Frost continued:

"Promptitude is in all such cases one of the most essential features of successful treatment. Even the time lost in summoning a physician is sometimes fatal. A system of strict discipline founded upon humane principles is absolutely necessary, but every respectable institution invites the strictest investigation. It is astonishing, my dear sir, how much the comfort and happiness of the insane depend upon systematic treatment such as is only possible in the benevolent institutions I am commanding to your notice."

"Asylums for the insane are not, you must remember," broke in Dr. Brown, "what they

were; the most attached and affectionate relative, or the most conscientious guardian, need not for a moment hesitate to place their afflicted ones under the care of a properly-managed establishment."

"It is most gratifying to notice how rapidly the patients grow calm and peaceful under our modern system," said the third eminent practitioner. "I heartily endorse the opinion and advice of my professional brothers. Mr. Weelodon, you really cannot do better than put her away!"

More and more excited grows the alderman while listening to their urgent advising; his agitation becomes painful to witness; although the day is cold, huge drops of perspiration roll down his face. He presses his hand upon his heart; it beats so furiously. He remembers all his wife has been to him in the past—her patient toiling with him in the old times of poverty and struggle, her anxious nursing when he was sick, how tenderly she loved him when he wooed her, and those hours of triumph, when her heart danced with him, and he saw in her bright, happy eyes the reflection of his own joyous exultation.

But he thinks also of that future of lofty glory and a grandly victorious ambition to which all his latest and most desperate strivings have been devoted, and of her as a stumbling block in its way. He nerves himself to endure all that he fears conscience will inflict, and with an effort which is full of agony and bitterness, to suffer in secret the pangs of present remorse for the acquirement of that vast future gain, on which he has already staked so much.

"It will kill her," he says to himself, "but it will kill her quickly, and if the sacrifice must be made, however dreadful it may be to me, still it SHALL be made! I suffer in the fulfillment of these dreams of greatness as much as she suffers. It is the natural way of our opposing natures. The strongest will win!"

The doctors watch him with the deepest sympathy, thinking how tightly entwined about the man's heart are the roots of a husband's love. There are tears in their eyes when thrillingly he cries out, with a sudden gesture of intense horror and repugnance:

"No! no! no! Gentlemen, do not tempt—do not tempt me! You do not know—I—I cannot tell. No, no! I cannot do that—I dare not do it!"

But the tempters redouble their efforts for his conversion. They point out the beneficial, wholesome influence change of scene exerts upon a mind overwhelmed merely with ordinary trouble and anxiety; they dwell upon the extreme care given in these establishments to insure a condition of perfect mental and bodily repose, and tell him how everything that can minister to the individual tranquility, comfort or enjoyment of each patient receives the most studious consideration, etc., etc.

At last, with a pang that seems to rend his heart in twain, the reluctant husband promises that in the event of no favourable symptoms arising, he will be governed by them, and send away his sane wife to be confined with lunatics.

"You cannot do it too quickly, sir, believe me," says Dr. Frost, as he takes his leave.

The physicians depart; the day wanes; the alderman sits gloomily down to a solitary dinner, after which he takes very much more than his usual quantity of wine. When he leaves the table, with his dark face flushed, and his heavy, black brows knit, and his long lips compressed, he goes straight up to his wife.

He says sternly to himself, as he ascends the stairs:

"Now Alice, this will be our last battle! Your fate is in your own hands; it is for you to decide, not me."

He finds his wife sitting in an easy chair near the toilet table, and near her, watchfully observant of her every motion, the female keeper—a tall, broad-shouldered, long-armed, hard-featured woman, who firmly believes in the poor creature's insanity.

Mrs. Weelodon's attitude is one of complete despair and misery. Her long hair flows in a mass of shining curves and curls over her shoul-

ders, and her little white hands are very tightly clasped together. She hears the door open, and sees in the glass her husband entering the room; but, although her bosom heaves and her lips quiver, and a new expression springs into her inflamed but now tearless and heavy eyes, she does not turn to look at him.

The woman and the alderman whisper together:

"She's a little better now, sir—seems exhausted."

"Leave me alone with her. Should you be wanted, I will ring the bell."

"Pray be careful, sir, not to excite the poor thing—so much depends upon quietness."

"Rely upon me, nurse. I will be very careful."

Left alone with his wife, the alderman stands for some minutes perfectly still and silent, waiting to strike, and yet afraid to strike, that awful blow which means, as he believes, "death and a splendid alliance," or a life in which the woman he loved—he fears, still loves—will have become his abject slave, and he her hated tyrant! He says still: "Her fate is in her own hands—it is for her, not me, to choose;" and thinks: "She is still young and very beautiful, and, if we were divorced, might readily win another's heart, and live with him a long life of domestic and social pleasure and happiness."

Alice heard him sigh heavily.

"Alice," he says, softly, "will you speak to me?"

Without moving, she answers, her voice low and tremulous:

"I must see my mother and my sister."

"If I find them, and take you to them, convince you by their lips that I have settled upon them for their lives a small income, will you then consent to abandon them—never to mention their names to me or to my friends?"

"No, I cannot consent. Never again! never again!"

"Alice, do you know what the doctors say?"

She shudders, but does not reply.

"They say that you are mad!"

"But you, John—you know that I am not mad."

He hesitates before, in a voice of sternly enforced quietness, he slowly replies:

"I shall know it if you listen to reason, Alice, and display a wife's obedience."

She raises herself, stands erect, and faces him with wildly distended eyes, petrified with terror, looking more like some hunted, fatally wounded animal brought to bay, than a woman, in the quiet seclusion of her home and the presence of her husband, her natural protector.

Presently, with a painful, desperate effort, and with hands outstretched in wild appeal, she gasps:

"John! John! do I understand you? Is it possible? O God! O God!" And after a pause she despairingly adds: "I understand. I see all. I knew it long ago—long ago. You have ceased to love me. I tire you—I am in your way. You wish to be rid of me. This horrible device is—is to prove me mad! to make me mad! to shut me up for life with mad people! to kill me!"

Her voice, gradually raised, ends almost in a shriek.

"Alice, you must not excite yourself so terribly. Pray, pray be calm."

He looks frightened as he says this—seems almost as excited as the poor, helpless woman he addresses.

She comes nearer to him, looks entreatingly into his eyes, and, with a sudden effort of self-control, speaks:

"If we must part, John, is there no kinder way but this? Must I be tortured to death in a madhouse, or die a lingering death here? Is there no other way? Can we not live apart? Let me go to my mother and sister—let me go home."

He says, with returning sternness:

"You are at home now. This is your home."

She, sadly shaking her head, replies:

"There is no home where there is no love."

In a softened voice, he asks:

"When did I say that I had ceased to love you?"

"Never, perhaps, in words; but in deeds, daily, for years, most harshly, most cruelly; and deeds, John, are more open, more truthful than words. Could I believe in your love when you drove from me the mother I loved so dearly, the sister to whom she was so true, and I—through you—so heartless and so false?"

"Your mother went from you of her own free will. But of what use are my denials? You are full of morbid imaginings, Alice; it is part of your disease."

"Disease! What disease?" she exclaims, indignantly.

"Madness!"

"I am not mad, and you know it, John! You have separated me from my relatives—you have shut me up in this great, grand, gilded cage, to pine away and die, that you may marry some aristocratic lady and be the founder of a great family. I have suspected it often; and in your guilty face and tell-tale eyes I now read how true those suspicions were. You have driven away from me the only relatives I have in all the wide, wide world. You feared their loving eyes—they stood in the way of that wicked will which now will work my miserable end in torture, madness, and death!"

"You are exciting yourself again, Alice. Be calm, or I must call your keeper! Do you know that these furious outbursts have already alienated her—that she has sent for a straight jacket?"

For some minutes silence prevails.

"Have you nothing more to say to me, Alice?" he asks, and can but just hear her low reply:

"Nothing."

"You refuse to submit?"

"To what?"

Coldly and harshly he answers.

"To continue," says he, "true to the promise you gave me in your mother's presence—the promise she was sensible enough to exact from you—the promise you did not love me well enough to give at my request—the faithful, solemn promise that you would live apart from your relatives, and never talk about them. Is it for my wife to associate herself with the most loathsome dregs of society?"

"I will not have them so cruelly maligned!" she cries, passionately stamping her shapely little foot.

He whispers in her ear:

"The outlawed bankrupt, the mother you sought in the lowest haunts of infamy, the sister you saw singing ballads in the kennel—what are they?"

Now, indeed, she seemed mad! With the wildest and most ungovernable fury she sprang at him, shrieking:

"Whatever they are I would be, rather than live with such a monster as you now are in my sight!"

He caught her by the white, thin wrists, and held her fast, as, again lowering his voice, he whispered fiercely:

"You are signing your own death-warrant, madam! Your cries have alarmed your keeper. I hear her coming—she is at the door."

Almost as he spoke the woman's knock was heard, and, without waiting for a reply, she entered.

Seeing Alice thus held, with her magnificent long hair tossed about in dishevelled masses, her gauntly white face and bloodless lips, her wildly-heaving bosom, distended eyes, and tightly-clenched hands, no one would have hesitated for an instant in saying, "She is mad!"

The resolute, watchful woman, quietly approaching them, looked sternly into her patient's eyes, and said reproachfully, to the alderman:

"I told you, sir, to be careful. You have said or done something to excite her."

"She seemed quite calm and rational at first," whispered the alderman, after releasing his wife's wrists, and the woman whispered back:

"These lucid intervals are very deceiving to those who do not understand them."

Low as they were, Alice caught her words, and, with a terrible effort, recovering herself sufficiently to speak, she said:

"John, this woman deceives herself. Tell her I am not mad."



["YOU LOOK PENSIVE, DARLING!"]

The woman, holding her back with gentle firmness, nodded significantly to the alderman to go away, and, winking at him, said to his wife, as if she were coaxing a petulant child :

"No, no, my dear! Of course not—only a little excited, that's all! You'll soon get over that, won't you, dearie?"

The alderman moved to the door, and stood there for some seconds, full of pain, looking perplexed and puzzled.

Then, as he laid his hand reluctantly upon the handle, he turned and said :

"If my wife should want to write to me, nurse, you must let her do so. It may have a soothing effect."

As he spoke he looked askance into his wife's face, and, going down the stairs, muttered :

"She was a good wife to me, and very beautiful!"

One of the servants passed him just then. Looking into his face, he saw tears rolling down his cheeks and overheard his words.

[END OF BOOK THE FIRST.]

BOOK THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

A PROJECTED HOLIDAY.

We laugh and we cry, we sing and we sigh,
And life will have wintry weather!
So we'll hope and love on, since you, love, and I
Are husband and wife together.

GERALD MASSEY.

Two years have gone by, and brought rapid changes.

Ernest Benny is still getting on in his profession, and is making many good influential friends.

He has just got married, and the name of his wife is Clara.

His sister Ellen is also married; you thought she would be, of course; we men are not such

muffs as to let chances of her kind go past uncaught—no, no, no! She is Mrs. Church, and her husband is the young man lodger before-mentioned; he who had a rich uncle with a conservatory—you'll remember him.

They are all living very happily together on Ham Common, and quite close to glorious old Richmond Park, in one of the quaintest and coziest and funniest of old-fashioned houses, a house shut in with a group of noble trees behind a low wall, with an evergreen oak at one corner, and some walnut trees in front, and some aspen trees shivering with a sound like that of running brooks in the pure, sweet breezes.

It has a broad strip of lawn before it, shut in with sweet-scented, flowering shrubs, and its front is covered with roses and honeysuckle, and various other flowering, perfumed climbers. There are more cupboards in it, of all kinds, shapes and sizes, than you could count in a long summer day; you tumble across them everywhere, and in the most unlikely places—corner cupboards, and projecting cupboards, and cupboards in recesses, cupboards beside the doors, windows and fireplaces, and over the doors, windows and fireplaces, and even under

some of the doors and windows; cupboards on the stairs, and cupboards on the landing-places, cupboards everywhere. The passages are all at right angles, and no room—there are twenty-six rooms—seems to be on the same level as another; you go up steps into some, and down steps into others, and most of them have more than one door. They are all low, and they are all wainscotted except the room of state, the largest room, the room with six long, narrow, French windows under a verandah, and opening out upon the lawn. The windows of all the upper rooms are more or less square or squabby, and altogether of an independent, original turn of mind, as regards their kind, size and situation.

It has a stone-paved kitchen of mighty proportions, with a grand, old-fashioned fireplace newly fitted with a very convenient modern grate, and beside it an oven large

enough to bake the bread for a regiment of soldiers. There are sculleries and larders and cellars and other places of domestic convenience too numerous to mention, all stone-paved, and added from time to time by successive proprietors; and in one nook beside it is an empty stable and a desolate coach-house, where by-and-by there is to be a pony with a basket-chaise.

Here the birds of all kinds sing their sweetest songs; here friends are welcomed and made jolly, and are never thought to come too often, and are never considered too numerous. Homely thrift and plenty go hand in hand.

There is no apology for want of ceremony. The ladies themselves come out into the porch to welcome your arrival with the brightest of glad and happy smiles, and you sit in the garden or stroll about the house just for all the world as if you were its proprietor, and the genial young hosts and their pretty young wives were your delighted guests. The breath of the open common, with its fine old timber, fills your lungs; all kinds of the most picturesque and pleasant walks surround you in rich abundance; you are where Chaucer was when he sang as you might sing :

There is no herte (I deem) in such dispair,
Ne yet with thoughtis froward and contraire
So overlaid, but that it should sone have bote
If it had onis felt this savour note (sweet).

On a warm evening in May that ought to be an evening in June, it looks and feels so like the glowing heart of summer, we look into the parlour which opens by heavy folding doors, now closed, into the large drawing-room with its six tall windows. We find there Mrs. Church, bright-eyed, merry, happy-looking as ever, and Ernest sitting beside his wife, Clara, a look of loving tenderness in his eyes.

"You look pensive, darling. Of what are you thinking?"

"Of the only thought that ever saddens me now, Erny—of my sister Alice!"

(To be continued.)

THE WITHERED BRANCH.

A ROMANTIC STORY OF THE
WELSH COAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WALLADMOR."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ABBEY OF GRIFFITH AT GAUVON.

For some time Bertram's aged companion kept up her speed, but, on reaching a part of the moor which was interspersed with turf pits, she was compelled to suit her pace to the intricacy of the ground, though even here she selected her path from the labyrinth before her with a promptitude and decision which showed that she was well acquainted with the ground she was traversing.

On emerging again into smoother roads, she resumed at intervals her rapid motions; and again, on some sudden caprice, as it seemed, would slink into a stealthy pace, and walk on tiptoe, as if in the act of listening or surprising someone before her.

Once only she spoke, upon Bertram's asking if the abbey were a safe place for a stranger.

"Oh, ay!" she replied; "Edward Nicholas is a lamb when he's not provoked, but his hand is red with blood—his hand is red with blood!"

No question after this roused her attention. Now and then she sang; sometimes she crooned a word or two to herself; and more often she sank into thoughtful silence; until at length, after advancing in this way for about a mile and a half, suddenly Bertram missed her, and, looking round, he saw the outline of a figure stealing away in the dusk and muttering some indistinct sounds of complaint.

He felt considerable perplexity at being thus suddenly abandoned by his guide, but from this he was relieved by now distinguishing a group of towers and turrets close to him, which at first had escaped his eye from the dark background of mountainous barrier with which they seemed to blend; and, going a few steps nearer, he perceived a light issuing from the window of a vault.

To this window, for the purpose of reconnoitring the inmates of so lonely an abode, he now pushed his way with some difficulty through heaps of ruins and tangled thorns.

The upper edge of the window-frame, however, being on a level with the ground, he could perceive little more than a small part of a stone floor which lay at a great depth below him, and on this, by the strong light of a blazing fire, he saw the moving shadows of human figures as they passed and repassed. And at intervals he heard the rolling of casks and barrels.

Determined to examine a little further, he stretched himself along the steep declivity of earth which sloped down to the lower edge of the window. In this posture he gained a complete view of the vault, which, to his astonishment, he now discovered to be a subterranean church of vast dimensions, such as are sometimes found in the old monasteries below the ordinary chapel of the order.

Seated at a table near the fire was a young man whose face, as it was at this moment lit up by a blazing fire, proclaimed him at once to be the stranger whose services to Miss Walladmor and mysterious interview with her he had witnessed with so much interest.

Round about him stood groups of armed men, but of these he took little notice. Bertram remarked that all of them treated him with an air of respect, and addressed him by the title of captain, to which on his part he replied with an air of good-natured familiarity that seemed to disown the station of authority which they were disposed to confer upon him.

Anxious to hear and see a little more before he ventured into such a company, he endeavoured to shift his position for one more convenient to his purpose; but in this attempt he nearly precipitated himself through the win-



[“IN MY YOUTH I WAS AS NEAR TO THE GALLOWS AS YOU ARE!”]

dow. He recovered his footing, however, by suddenly catching at a mountain ash; but, in so doing, he dislodged a quantity of earth and stones, which fell rattling down amongst the party below.

“Rats! rats!” instantly exclaimed the whole body. “Shall we fire, captain?”

“Stop a moment,” said Nicholas; and, mounting a ladder which stood near the window, he held up a lighted bough of Scotch fir, and saw the place of Bertram's concealment.

“God bless my soul!” exclaimed he; “it's my young friend in search of the picturesque. I protest I never looked for his coming through the window. Here, bear a hand, and help him in.”

The ladder was now applied and steadied.

After some little difficulty in extricating himself from the rubbish and thorns which beset him, Bertram descended, and was not sorry to find himself, though amongst such society, sud-

denly translated from the severe cold of the air and a situation of considerable peril to the luxury of rest and a warm fire.

All the men were dismissed by their leader except one, who was directed to place wine and refreshments on the table, which was done.

“And now, Valentine,” said the leader, with a sly twinkle in his eyes, “you may return home, for I think you have a scolding wife; and, by the way, if she wishes to have a certificate of your good behaviour and fidelity to her during your absence from home, get me a pencil and I will write one.”

“Ah, Captain Nicholas!” said the man. “you're still the same man; always ready for a joke, let danger be as near as it will.”

“Danger! what danger?”

“Why, to say the truth, I don't above half like the old woman from Anglesea.”

“What, Gillie Godber?”

“Yes. She talks strangely at times; and, as

sure as your name's mentioned, she puts on a—*Judas face*, and talks—well, I hardly know what she talks; but it's my belief and means you no good."

"Hm! I have sometimes thought so myself, yet without knowing why. At times she's as kind to me as if she were my own mother. At all events I can't do without her, so long as I have business at Walladmor Castle. Her son, you know, lives there; and, but for her, I should often be at a loss for means of communicating with him."

"And has Gillie been at Walladmor to-day?"

"Yes; pretty early this morning."

"Then, take my word for it, it's she that has blabbed to Sir Morgan about the funeral. And I'd be glad to think that were the worst; for I heard it whispered once or twice to-day that Sir Morgan had got notice of your return. Black Will saw an express of Sir Morgan's riding off to Carnarvon; and, by one that left Machynleth at noon, I heard that Alderman Gravesand was stirring with all his bulldogs."

"Well, they'll hardly catch me this night, I think. And, as the moon will soon be rising, I would advise you to make the best of your way to Aberkilvin. Pleasant moonlight to you; and give my compliments to your wife."

"Ah, captain! I wish there were no moonlight to-night; for my heart misgives me, unless you take better care, some cross luck will fall out. However, I'll not go to Aberkilvin; I'll stay in the neighbourhood, and, if I hear a shot, I'll come down with one or two more."

The man retired, and Nicholas for a few minutes appeared to be sunk in reverie.

Recovering himself, he addressed Bertram with an air of gaiety:

"Well, my young friend, and how do you like the world in Wales? You have taken my advice, I find, and have come to see Ap Gavon."

"It was you, then, that were my guide to Machynleth? I was beginning to suspect as much. Who it was that sent me the note this morning, I need not ask; for my eyes assure me that you were the person who presided on that occasion, both as commander and as chief mourner."

"And I hope you disapproved of my action in neither part."

"To do you justice, you behaved incomparably well in both. In the latter part, however, well as you acquitted yourself, you must excuse me if I doubt your sincerity."

"You surprise me," said Nicholas, smiling. "What! doubt the sincerity of my grief for the death of Captain le Harnois?"

"My doubts go even a little further. I doubt whether the body of Captain le Harnois accompanied the procession. But what could bring so large a train of mourners together? Will you say upon your word that you have deposited the body in any burying-place?"

Nicholas laughed immoderately.

"Your disownment is wonderful. As to the body, I can assure you that it has not only been deposited in a burying-place at Utragan, but immediately afterwards dispersed as holy reliques all over the country; and no saint's reliques in Christendom will meet with more honour and attention. As to what brought the crowd together—if you come to that, my young friend, what brought you there? I have some plans which make it prudent for me to renew an old connection with a body of stout friends at sea and on shore. Most of the others, I suppose, came for liquor. And you, if I do not affront you by that suggestion, were naturally desirous of seeing how the land lay before you commenced operations. The old fox is at fault in a strange country."

"You will persist, I see, in looking upon me as an adventurer."

"I knew your profession at first sight, by your face, and what your destiny is to be in this life."

"And which of my unhappy features is it that bears this unpleasant witness against me?"

"Unhappy you may truly call them," said the other, smiling bitterly; "unhappy, indeed, for

they are the same as my own. I rest a little upon omens and prefigurations, and am superstitious—most men are who have lived upon the sea, resting their all upon the faith of its changeable waves. It will mortify you, my young friend, to confess—but it is true—that much as storm, sun, passion, and hardships may have tanned and disfigured my face, in features and shape it is still like your own gentle, feminine face, with its fair complexion and overshadowing locks. I remember a portrait which once an idle artist painted of me, in my sixteenth year. It was wonderfully like your own. Kindred features should imply kindred dispositions and minds. The first time that I observed you closely was on that evening when you came on shore from Jackson's brig. You thought I was asleep; I know it. But you were wrong. I was watching and thinking, and I then saw in your eye my own; recognized myself in every feature of your face; in your forehead I read in my fancy all the storms that too surely have tossed and rocked the little boat of your uneasy life; speculated upon your plans, and wondered the while—it was so strange."

"People of education are given to speculations," said Bertram; "to read the souls of others and recognize in them vaguely or definitely the more common sentiments and feelings of our race, is not, after all, very wonderful."

A smile passed over his companion's countenance whilst he replied:

"Education? Yes, I have had some education, and doubtless education is a fine thing—a something of astonishing value. But you overrate its power. A man of the wildest pursuits, with the nature of a ruffian, may shroud himself in education, as a wolf in sheep's clothing, and be well received by those accomplished creatures whom fortune brought into this world, not in smoky huts, but in rich men's luxurious homes. And a little learning will sometimes make a great fool seem wondrous wise. I have stolen my little morsel of education amongst a gipsy-like troop of players at country fairs. They were my teachers, and if I resemble them somewhat too closely, why, that's no fault of mine, but of those worthy paupers that thought proper to steal me in my infancy. There are hours, Bertram, in which I have longings, the fondest of longings, for conversations with men of higher faculties—men that I could understand—men that could answer me—ay, and that would answer me, and not turn away from the poor vagabond with disdain."

"Could I be in some measure such a comrade? and would you choose me for these conversations?"

"As you please. It rests with yourself. But, Bertram, at any rate, I rejoice to find in you one that will risk his life, although in risking it he knows what life is—that has eyes quick to see—thoughts worth the thinking—feelings—but, dissembling hypocrite that you are" (and here he smiled), "why do you not laugh to hear a ruffian talk of feelings?"

"You think some well-educated comrade, when your conscience is troublesome, will conceal crime under some happier aspect—may help to take the sting out of your offences, and give to a wicked deed the colouring of a noble one?"

Nicholas replied with knitted brows, in a quick and stern voice:

"What I have done I am not coward enough to deny, and I never shall be neither here nor there, above—if any above or below there be. I want nobody to call my deeds by pretty names. Men call them crimes, and I have no softer name to give them. But I would fain have such a friend as you might be. One to whom I could confide my secret thoughts without kneeling as before a priest, or confessing as to a judge. I sometimes dream of one who would allow the poor guilty outcast to attach himself to his affection, and sometimes to repose his weary head upon a human heart."

Bertram stared, which the other observed with a smile.

"You wonder at this. You must recollect that I told you I had once been amongst players."

There was a pang of bitterness in his voice and manner which moved Bertram strongly.

"Speak frankly," he said. "What is it you wish of me?"

"This: Will you run joint hazard with me—become what I am and try your fortunes in this country? or take your own course, but now and then permit me, when my heart is crazed by passion, and I am hipped by solitude and unanticipated remorse, anguish, despair—what you will—to lighten it in your society?"

"I will have no unlawful connections," said Bertram.

"But can you, in the other sense, be my friend?"

"Rash man! Why should you have such boundless confidence in one who has no sympathy with your lawless pursuits or your political aspirations?"

Nicholas stepped nearer to the young man, looked with keen but kindly investigation in his eyes, and then, pressing his hand, said:

"Have you forgotten that poor wretch to whom, when perishing amidst the tumult of the waves, you resigned not only your own security, but descended into the perilous and stormy waters where your life was at my mercy? If in such a man I have not boundless confidence—in whom dare I confide? Deeply, oh, deeply, I am in your debt! Every better feeling of my nature clings to you; every tender emotion of my heart grows stronger as I look upon you. Be my friend."

"Is it possible? Are you that man? I recollect his forehead hidden by streaming hair; convulsive spasms played about his lips; and the face was hidden by a long beard, and yet—yes, I do recognize you. It is the same face!"

"I am he; and but for you I should now lie in the bowels of a shark, or rest spitted upon some rock at the bottom of the ocean. Let us go into the open air out of this foul smelling vault; it is too like the grave." And then he added, with a sigh, and in a lower tone, "Too like the grave!"

The owls and other night birds which had found an asylum here, disturbed by the steps of the nightly wanderers, soared aloft to the highest turrets.

Moving in silence for some minutes, both stepped out through the pointed arch of a narrow gateway into the open air upon a lofty battlement.

Here Nicholas seized Bertram's hand with the action of one who would have checked him at some dangerous point; and, making a gesture which expressed "Look before you!" led him to the outer edge of the wall.

At this moment the full moon in perfect glory burst from behind a towering pile of clouds, and illuminated a region such as the young man had hitherto scarcely conceived by description.

Dizzily he looked down upon what seemed a bottomless abyss at his feet.

The abbey wall, on which he stood, built with colossal art, was but the crest or surmounting of a steep and monstrous wall of rock, which rose out of depths in which his eye could find no point on which to settle.

On the other side of this immeasurable gulf lay in deep shadow the main range of Snowdon, whose base was perhaps covered with thick forests, but whose summit and declivities displayed a dreary waste.

Dazzled by the grandeur of the spectacle, Bertram would have sought repose for his eye by turning round; but the new scene was, if not greater, still more striking. From his lofty station he overlooked the spacious ruins of the entire monastery, as its highest points, silvered over by the moonlight, stood up from amidst the illimitable night of ravines, chasms, and rocky peaks that formed the dependencies of Snowdon.

Adding to these permanent features of the scene the impressive accident of the time—midnight, with a universal stillness in the air, the whole became like a fairy scene, in which the dazzled eye comprehended only the total impression, without the separate details or the connections of its different parts.

So much, however, might be inferred from the walls which lay near with respect to those

which gleamed in the distance—that the towers and building of the Abbey had been for the most part built upon prominent peaks of rock. Those only, which were so founded, had resisted the hand of Time, while the cross walls which connected them, wanting such a rocky basis, had fallen in.

Solemnly above all the chapels and turrets rose, brilliantly illuminated by the moon, the main tower. Upon a solitary crag, that started from the deeps, it stood with a boldness that seemed to proclaim defiance on the part of man to Nature, and set the victorious efforts of his hands over all her opposition.

Round about it every atom of the connecting masonry had mouldered away and sunk into heaps of rubbish below, so that all possibility of reaching the tower seemed to be cut off.

But beyond this tower Gothic fretwork and imperfect windows rose from the surrounding crags, and in many places were seen pillars springing from two disengaged points of rock—rising higher and higher—and at last inclining towards each other in vast arches; but the central stones that should have looked the architraves of the mighty gates were wanting; and the columns stood to a fanciful eye like two lovers, whom nature and pure inclination have destined for each other; but whom some malicious mischance has separated for ever.

Bertram shut his eyes before the exciting spectacle; and when he opened them again, his guide said with a tranquil voice, in which, however, a tone of exultation might be distinguished:

"This is Griffith ap Gauvon, of which I lately spoke to you."

All words, as Bertram felt, would fail to express the strength of his emotions; language would but have violated the solemnity of the thoughts which riveted his gaze to the scene before him. He was silent, therefore, and in a few moments his companion resumed:

"Bertram, I often stand here upon the edge of this giddy precipice, and look down upon the dread tranquillity of the spectacle. Often I feel as though I wanted no friend, as though nature, the mighty mother, were a sufficient friend that fulfilled all my wishes—a friend far better and wiser than any which the false world can offer! Come a little further!"

He led him sideways from that part of the building out of which they had issued by the little portal about a hundred yards beyond it.

The wall, there scarce three feet wide, stood nearly insulated, and was on the one side bounded by the abyss just described, and on the other by what might have been an inner court, that lay, however, at least three stories deep below. Nothing but a cross-wall, which rose above the court towards a little tower, touched this main wall.

At the extremity of this, where it broke off abruptly, both stopped.

Hardly forty steps removed from them, rose the great tower, which in past times doubtless had been connected with the point at which they stood; but was now divided by as deep a gulf as that which lay to the outside wall.

"Beyond there is nothing," said his guide, throwing forward his right hand. "Often do I come here and think how with but one short step onwards I might release myself from all that troubles me!"

"But the power and the grandeur of nature arrests and awes you?"

"Right! Look downwards in the abyss before us. Deep, deep below, trickles along, between pebbles, moss and rocky fragments, a little brook. Now it is lit up by the moon; and (Look! Am I deceived?) at this moment it seems to me as if something were stirring; and now something is surely leaping over! But, no, it was deception!" The sudden alarm which spoke in speech and action abruptly ended, and he resumed, with his former expressive manner: "Often when I have stood here in meditation, and could not comprehend what checked me from taking that one step, a golden pillar of moonlight has met me gleaming upwards from that little brook—one that I have haunted in

happier days; and suddenly I have risen as if ashamed, and stolen away in silence."

"Nicholas, do you believe in God?"

"You have guessed my secret. I have lately learnt to believe."

"By what happy chance?"

"Happy!" cried his companion, and laughed bitterly. Then he said, "Listen! I will tell you the truth. Leagued with bold and desperate men, I determined to rid the world of a knot of vipers! For months I waited for the moment when they should assemble together, in order to annihilate at one blow the entire brood! Daily I prayed, if you will call that praying, that this moment would arrive. But month after month passed; we waited, and despaired. At length on a day—I remember it was at noon—in burst one of our friends! 'Triumph and glory!' cried he. 'This night the King's ministers meet at Lord Harrowby's!' At these words many stern conspirators fell on their knees; others folded their hands—hands (God knows!) but little used to such a folding! I could do neither! I stretched out my arms and cried aloud, 'There is a Providence!'"

Bertram shrank from him in horror.

"This," he said, "is blasphemous!"

"Spare your horrors, and your morality. Providence, we know, has willed it otherwise. The honourable gentlemen, at whom we had revelled, flourished in prosperity and honour; and my friends moulder beneath the scaffold!"

"Having this origin, I presume that your faith in a Providence is at present—"

"Unshaken! My dagger was meant for Lord Londonderry; and, although he has escaped my wrath, I know not how, a curse seems to cling to my blade, that whomsoever I have once devoted to it with full determination of purpose, that man—"

Bertram shuddered, and said:

"So then it was a conspirator from Cato Street that I delivered from death?"

"Well! Push the conspirator over the wall, if you repent."

"But what carried you amongst such an atrocious band? What could you reap from the murder of the English ministers? No merchant from Amsterdam stood with a full purse in the background."

"One step leads to another; to begin is often of necessity to go forward; the rage of licentious mobs cannot be stopped until it has consumed itself. Upon the smoking ashes of the old palaces, between the overladen scaffold on one side and the charnel-house on the other, blood from each side floating the slippery streets—then is man's worth put to proof; then it is tried not by empty words, however eloquent, nor by the overloaded memory, which we call knowledge. At such times the strong arm and the deep-thinking head are the powers which command."

"And what would you have gained as chief of a wickedly maddened populace? The gratification of a mere appetite for destruction? For THAT I should scarce have thought even your misanthropy sufficient."

"I will tell you what allured me: the pleasure of giving worth the sway, and merit its deserts. Bertram, do not mock me when I tell you—a passionate love has crazed my wits. See, here is a handkerchief of hers! For HER sake I curse my ignoble life; for her sake I would sink its memory in deeds of nobler worth! Oh, that all the waters of ocean could cleanse this hand! that I had, for her sake, come up from that deep sea re-born, pure, though I were as helpless, as an infant! One dreadful night—But stop! what was that? Did you hear whispering below? Steps! Hush! hush!"

Bertram's companion suddenly drew his cloak from his shoulders, rolled it up under his arm, caught his coat-skirts under both arms, and stood with head and body bent forwards, his wildly-eager eyes searching and traversing the dark piles of building from which they had issued—his attitude that of a stag, who, with pointed ears and lifted fore-foot, prepares for the bound.

Bertram, too, cast his glance over the walls as far as the lower part of the ruins.

At once it struck him that if any hostile attack were made, they should be without deliverance—shut in, without other egress than that which would be pre-occupied by their assailants.

"I believe I was mistaken," said Nicholas, drawing his breath again, just as Bertram fancied he saw a stirring of the shadow which lay within the gateway at the further end.

He was on the point of communicating what he observed to the other, when suddenly a shot was fired. In that same instant Nicholas had thrown his cloak into the abyss; and, without a word spoken, ran straight, with an agility and speed that astonished Bertram, to the archway; from which figures of armed men were now seen to issue, apparently with the intention of intercepting the fugitive.

Bertram looked anxiously, expecting to see a struggle, for Nicholas was running right into the mouth of the danger.

But in the midst of his quickest speed he checked himself abruptly, turned to the left, leaped down with the instinctive agility of a chamois upon the wall below, which bisecting the inner court, connected the main wall with the outer, and then ran along upon the narrow ridge of this inner wall, interrupted as it was by holes and loose stones.

At every instant Bertram expected to see him fall, never to rise again.

But the danger to Nicholas came from another quarter. The pursuers, it would seem, had calculated on the intrepidity and agility of their man, and another group of men faced him on the opposite side. No choice appeared left to the fugitive but to surrender, or to leap down. Suddenly he stood still, pulled from his belt a brace of pistols, fired one in each hand upon the antagonists who stood nearest to him; and, whilst these shrank back in sudden surprise, though no one appeared wounded, with incredible dexterity and speed ran onward and disappeared!

In a moment after Bertram thought he heard a dull sound, as of a sudden plunge through briars and brambles into the rubbish below. And then all was still.

"One has burst the net," exclaimed the men, "but there stands his comrade; and if he prove the right one, no matter what becomes of the other."

So saying, both parties approached cautiously, to capture Bertram.

On his part, Bertram had no wish (as, indeed, he had no power) to escape. Advancing with a tranquil demeanour, he surrendered at once; and the next moment an Irishman of the party, being summoned to examine his features, held up a torch to his face, and solemnly pronounced the prisoner to be that Nicholas of whom they were in search!

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RESCUE.

"Come, let's away from this old monks' nest," said one of the constables; "for it looks uncanny."

"Ay, Sampson, and who knows but some of his gang may be lurking behind the pillars?"

"Nay, it's not altogether them that I'm thinking of, desperate as they are; but the old monks, with their strange cowls; and the enchanter Merlin; and the Lor' only knows how many ghosts beside! I could fancy that I saw some of them just now at the end of these long galleries! Come, men! let's away."

Others, however, objected, saying they were starved by long watching in the cold, and wanted refreshments.

It was determined, therefore, to halt.

Two men staid by the prisoner, whilst the rest collected wood, and soon succeeded in lighting a prodigious fire upon the spacious area before the main entrance into the Abbey.

Round this the party collected: a hamper of smuggled claret, which they had fortunately intercepted on its road from the Abbey, was unpacked. Wine and the genial warmth of the fire disposed all present except the prisoner to

mirth and festivity; and no other soul there but seemed to regard it as a point of conscience to reward their fatigue and celebrate their success by getting royally intoxicated.

"Why so downcast, my lad?" said one of the constables to Bertram; "in my youth I was as near to the gallows as you are; and yet, you see, I am now virtuous, and a man of credit in the State."

"Ay, Sampson," said Kilmary, "unless you're much belied, you got your reprieve just as you were going to be turned off."

"And you, Kilmary, got yours something later; for I've often heard that you were cut down after hanging some five minutes or so. Ha! ha! I remember you. 'Twas in Wicklow, in time of rebellion; when we had so much business that we had to get our hangmen where we could; and bunglers they often were, although it's true that now and then there was not time enough to go through the work properly. But, as I was saying, courage, my young lad! Were I in your place, I would bless my stars that I had fallen into the company of honest men and got rid of such rascally friends as yours that run away at the pinch. You see by this that no dependence can be placed upon such villains, and that virtue only can be relied on. Ah! my lad, I could preach finely to you; but, Lord! where's the use of it? If you're hanged you'll not want it; if you're not hanged you'll soon forget it."

Bertram smiled sadly, and presently his attention was withdrawn from the unpleasant circumstances of his own situation to the striking features of the scene before him.

In the background lay Snowdon, bending into a vast semicircle, absorbing into its gigantic shadow the minor hills which rested at its base; all were melted into perfect unity, and from the height of its main range the whole seemed within a quarter of a mile from the spot which he himself occupied.

Between this and the abbey lay a level lawn, chequered with moonlight and the mighty shadows of Snowdon.

Of the abbey itself many parts appeared in the distance: sullen recesses which were suddenly and partially revealed by the fluctuating glare of the fire; aerial windows through which the sky gleamed in splendour, unless when it was obscured for a moment by the clouds which sailed across; pinnacles and crosses of sublime altitude in the remote distance; and in the immediate foreground the great gateway of the abbey and the wide circle of armed men carousing in the ruddy glow of the fire in sitting or recumbent attitudes.

From this fine natural composition, which he contemplated with a half regret that Merlin did not really make his appearance from some long gallery or gloomy archway to complete the wildly romantic scene, Bertram was suddenly called off to listen to the conversation, which, as the spirit flasks were emptied, had gradually risen into the high key of violent altercation.

A reward of £500 had been offered, as he now recollects, for the apprehension of Nicholas; and the dispute turned upon the due appropriation of this sum.

"What the d—l do you mean, Sampson? Don't I tell you that rank or precedence has nothing to do in this case, so that's settled; we are all to share alike."

"D— your impudence!" cried Sampson. "Social distinctions in all things. Why, it's as clear as sunlight in October that I, as leader and the man of genius, am to have £300; and you divide the other £200 amongst you."

"What?" said the Irishman; "£200 amongst eight of us?"

"Why, as for you, Kilmary, you get nothing. I saw you—you stayed behind and wouldn't venture yourself upon the wall."

"No. Red-hair, you sneer off!" exclaimed all the rest.

But Red-hair protested against this, and almost screamed with wrath:

"Go on! By rights I should have half," said Kilmary, "for without me you would never have known who he was."

"Not a farthing more than according to merit, and then your share will come short." Kilmary leaped up and clenched his fist:

"May the great d—l swallow—"

But scarce had he uttered word when a shot was fired, then a second—a third—a fourth, and a wild shout arose at a little distance off:

"Cut them down!"

Sampson had fallen back wounded; but, full of presence of mind, he called out to the Irishman:

"Seize him, Kilmary! seize the prisoner, or he'll escape!"

But Kilmary had been the first to escape himself. Some others rapidly followed.

Two of greater courage and resolution were preparing to execute the orders of the constable, when they were suddenly assailed so fiercely that one tumbled into the fire, and the other, stepping back suddenly, fell and rolled over the wounded constable.

An uproar of shouts and curses arose, and in this tumult Bertram found himself seized by two stout fellows, who hurried him off, before he had time to recollect himself, into the shades of a neighbouring thicket.

Here, where nobody could discover them by the light of the fire, they made a halt and cut the cords that confined the prisoner.

"Take breath for a moment," whispered one of his conductors, "and then away with us through thick and thin, before the bloodhounds rally."

"Captain Nicholas, shall we give them another round?" said a voice which struck Bertram as one which he had somewhere heard before.

"No, Tom, no. Let us be quiet whilst we are well. We have executed our work in a workmanlike style. Another discharge would only point out the course of our flight; for fly we must: they have a rear guard. It will be well if we all reach our quarters this night in safety. Disperse quickly, my lads; it is our best chance. Good night to you all, and thanks for your able services. Mr. Bertram, I will put you in your way."

All the rest immediately stole away and were quickly lost among the shadows of the bushes. Bertram again found himself alone with Edward Nicholas, who guided him away from the neighbourhood of the abbey by intricate, almost impracticable, paths up hill and down—through blind lanes and within the shadowy skirts of forests, proceeding once or twice along the pebbly channels of the little mountain brooks. On such ground Bertram often lost his footing; and Nicholas, who kept ahead, was more than once obliged to turn back and lend him his assistance.

It was with no small feeling of relief, therefore, that he at length found himself again upon a level path which wound amongst the crags and woodland, but in so maze a track that it required little less than an Indian sagacity to trace it. From this they emerged into a series of ridings cut through the extensive woods of Tre Mawr, and, as they approached the end of one of these alleys, Bertram saw before them a wide heath stretching like a sea under the brilliant light of the wintry moon, which had now attained her meridian altitude.

"Here," said Nicholas, as they issued upon the heath, "here we must part; for the road I must now pursue would be too difficult for a person unacquainted with the ground. You, I suppose, admire this bright moon and the deluge of light she sheds; so do not I, and I heartily wish some moonstruck poet or sonneteer had her in his pocket, for a dark night would have favoured our retreat. As it is we must cross the heath by separate routes. You shall have the easiest. Do you see that black point on the heath? It is a stone of remarkable size and shape. When you reach it, turn to the left; and then, upon coming to the peat-trenches, to the right. Go on until you arrive at a little hill, from the summit of which, and at a point about a mile distant, you will observe some inclosure. There dwells Evan Williams. Mention my name; he will gladly conceal you until the heat of the

pursuit is over. I will contrive to communicate with you in a day or two by means of Tom Godber, the young man who spoke to me as we left Ap Gauvon."

"Ah! by the way, I thought I knew his voice; he is the son, then, of old Mrs. Gillie Godber from Anglesea?"

"Exactly; and a helper in the stables at Walldimor Castle. You may trust him safely, for he is entirely attached to my interests; but now good night, for there is every appearance of snow coming on. It has been threatening for the last twenty-four hours; cold so severe as this is always foretells snow. There will be a heavy fall before morning. Good night!"

So saying, Edward Nicholas struck across the heath, leaving Bertram in some perplexity as to the course he ought to adopt.

(To be continued.)

LOCKING THE STABLE DOOR; OR, A LITTLE DISPUTE.

"MAGGIE," said John, one winter night,
When the weather was cold and wet,
"You did not shut the stable door,
And I wonder you could forget.
You know that you went there late for eggs,
And you left the door open, dear;
So better go lock it at once, Maggie,
Or the pony will stray, I fear."

"Why, John, you were in the stable last—
You went to give Fanny her corn;
And I think you had better lock the door,
If you want her to-morrow morn."

"Maggie, you know that you went for eggs."

"Oh, but that was at four o'clock;
And if you're afraid of Fanny, John,
You had better go turn the lock."

"My boots are off, and my pipe is lit,
And I'm balancing books to-night;
Go, Maggie, and lock the stable door,
And see if the pony is right.
I would do it with pleasure myself,
But I'm busy, as you can see;

And I really think you ought to learn
To rely on yourself—not me."

He looked at his pretty little wife,
And she saucily tossed her head:
"And really I think that you might see
I am making to-morrow's bread.
And now, when my hands are in the yeast!
Why, John, I am perfectly shocked!
I wouldn't go now to the stable
If its door should never be locked."

"Very well, love; but if Fanny's lost
You must never blame me," he said.
Then he turned anew to bills and books,
And Maggie to kneading her bread.
But, on! the evening was sad and long,
And the balances all at fault;
And Maggie's bread did not rise at all—
It was ruined with too much salt!

Maggie was silent, busy, and sad,
And John could make nothing come clear.
At length he said, with a merry laugh:
"Shall we go to the stable, dear?"
So she took the light; he took the key;
And they went through the wind and rain;
But they never for trifles quarrelled more,

So the lesson was not in vain.

HUNDREDS of people were trying to gain admittance to the assembly chamber at Albany. A member from the central part of the State, a consequential sort of a chap, was pushing and crowding everyone in his endeavour to get in. A lady, who was being subjected to his rough treatment, turned and said: "You will please not push me in that manner." "Madam," said the man, stopping for a moment, and drawing himself up to his full height, "I am an assemblyman." "Oh, excuse me," was the lady's reply; "I took you for a gentleman."

THE HOUSEWIFE.

ORANGE SHORTCAKE.—Put a pint and a half of flour into a sieve, with a heaped teaspoonful of French cream tartar and half the quantity of soda. Add half a cup of butter. Rub the ingredients together till the butter and flour are thoroughly mixed. The success of the shortcake depends largely on this point. Now add quickly enough fresh milk to make a dough as soft as you can handle. Divide the dough into two even pieces, roll each out half an inch thick, rub both well with butter, and place one above the other. Bake in a quick oven till well done. Take enough sweet Florida oranges (the rusty fruit is cheaper and just as good for this purpose), peel the fruit, and with a very sharp knife cut it into thin round slices. Remove the seeds; cut each slice in quarters, separate the layers of shortcake as soon as they are baked, and strew them with oranges which have been well sprinkled with sugar. Pour over them any juice which may be left after slicing the oranges, and pile the layers together. Set the shortcake in a cool oven for five minutes, and serve at once. Be careful to use only the best cream tartar and soda. This may readily be procured at any good druggist's shop.

ROAST BEEF AND POTATO BALLS.—When your beef is about three-quarters done, pour nearly all of the gravy from the dripping-pan. Have ready some mashed potato, worked smooth with a beaten egg, pepper, and salt, then made into balls and rolled in flour. Place them in the pan around the meat, and baste until well browned. Serve in the same dish with the beef.

SCRAMBLED EGGS.—Heat one cup of milk in a spider, with a piece of butter, a little salt, and white pepper; beat five eggs, pour in, set over a very slow fire, and keep scraping from the bottom with a spoon until very little remains thin; then scrape into a dish without delay, as allowing it to harden with whey spoils it.

HAM PIE.—Butter some slices of bread, and lay in a pan; cut into bits a slice of ham, and sprinkle part over the bread; then put on a layer of canned tomatoes, with most of the juice; then cut fine one onion, mix with the remainder of the ham, and spread on; then butter more slices of bread and put on top, moistening it with tomato juice; cover, and bake in a moderate oven two and a half or three hours; if dry on top, pour over a little hot water.

COLLEGE PUDDINGS.—Grate two pounds of crumbs of bread, shred half a pound of suet, and mix with half a pound of currants, one ounce of citron and the same of orange-peel, one quarter of a pound of sugar, half a nutmeg, three eggs beaten, whites and yolks separately. Mix these all together, and make up the puddings to the size and shape of goose eggs. Having melted half a pound of butter in a frying-pan, when quite hot stew the puddings in it over a stove, turning them two or three times till they are of a fine light brown. Serve with pudding sauce.

SODA LOAF.—Take half a pound of butter, half a pound of moist sugar, three eggs, one teacupful of milk, one teaspoonful of carbonate of soda; rub the butter into the flour, add the sugar, whisk the eggs well, stir them into the flour, etc., with the milk; dissolve the soda in the milk, and beat the whole up together with a wooden spoon for some time; it should not be allowed to stand, but be placed in the oven immediately in a small loaf-tin with paper round it, well buttered. Bake in a moderate oven.

BEEF TEA.—An excellent recipe for beef or veal tea for a child or invalid: Cut into small dice a pound of lean meat, place on the fire with two tablespoonyuls of water and a teaspoonful of salt; stir this gently until the gravy is drawn, then add a quart of boiling water, simmer slowly for three-quarters of an hour, skimming off the fat; when done strain through a sieve.

SHADES AND SUNBEAMS.

A TRANSPARENT STORY.

CHAPTER V.

YEARS passed. Time, and many changes around and in the heart of the elder sister, had, in a measure, deadened the sickening sense of loneliness and bereavement, which haunted her so long after she had mourned over Ellen as one dead. Even the days when they two had lived together in their uncomfortable home were gradually assuming a dream-like shape in her memory.

Mrs. Bruce had done nobly by her adopted child. That girl was one to do honour to any hearthstone. Young and gentle and highly educated, she was cherished and loved and honoured, not only in her adopted mother's home, but wherever and in whatever circle she moved; and when it was known that she was really and in truth to be the rich lady's sole heiress, many suitors were not wanting.

Among these there was a youth, the son of an old friend of the good woman in question, who had been so fortunate as to ingratiate himself thoroughly in Mrs. Bruce's favour.

He had assisted him (peculiarly) through his collegiate course, for his parents' means were but limited, and the youth was ambitious; and when he had entered, subsequently, with bright hopes, on the practice of his profession, he had been furnished by her aid with an extensive and valuable library. So as a matter of duty, as well as of sincerest pleasure, Richard Lee was a frequent visitor at the house of his benefactress.

You will readily understand, in consequence, that it was to her a very natural thought, and a much wished-for consummation, the union of these young beings whom she loved with her whole heart; and a hundred plausible reasons will at once suggest themselves to your mind why the lady should at once and completely have succeeded in her desire.

I have revealed to you already that wedding scene. You know whether the heart of the bride responded to the words when she vowed to love, honour and obey. Gratitude for the kindness of the past—the knowledge of the fact that, in wedding Richard Lee, she was but acting in accordance with her best friend's, her more than mother's, wishes, were the causes, and sufficient causes Margaret thought them, for the part she took it upon herself to act in that transaction. But there was also another reason which the young girl scarcely dared to breathe, even to herself, why she should wed this man, and that at once.

There was one who had never sought her affections, or her hand in marriage, on whom, nevertheless, she had lavished all the affection of her heart. Within the "holy of holies," in her breast she had enshrined him an idol, but no human mind had guessed the worship she devoted to him; she had kept her secret well.

Immeasurable was the distance between herself and him. Too well did she know it. He was wedded to another, and never even dreamed the homage that young heart rendered to his lightest word. And he was one of those mighty sons of genius to whom the universal world bows down in reverence. The intellectual giants honoured and flattered him; his words were the wisdom even to wisest, and how should he know or care if the girl's heart beat wildly with devotion and love for him?

And Margaret, even while she adored, knew that such worship was sinful.

There was nothing repellent, absolutely, to her in the youth who spoke with her the marriage vows. She knew him talented and ambitious and truthful, but her heart-worship was given wholly to another.

You know now why, in that scene on which you looked, she stood so cold and pale and passionless. He was among the crowd that pressed around her to offer their glad congratulations,

and the rich tones of his voice mingled with the rest like a strange and powerful chord of music. But she had ear for his only, and he named her the bride of another, while on his own arm leaned the proud and lovely woman he called his wife!

Never did good Mrs. Bruce look with more of just pride on her protégée; but had she read the untold story of that young heart?

CHAPTER VI.

My story, doubtless, has thus far proved itself a piece of transparency to the reader, and he knows who was the child watching alone beside the dying woman, leaving her for a moment while she slept to beg in the streets, and nursing her with little aid from neighbour or friend, bestowing on the penniless woman all the devotion and care she could have lavished on her had she been the richest lady in the land. You know that it was she who wept with that fair bride one wintry morning long ago in a fireless room, when they were destitute of all life's comforts, and deserted by their father.

It remains for me to explain how this woman came to be her guardian.

When Margaret was gone out in search of food and a more comfortable shelter, which expedition turned out so well for herself, Ellen, exhausted by hunger, sunk into a sound sleep. For a long time she slept on undisturbed, dreaming, poor child, of every imaginable comfort she had not, and enjoying her plenty in the bright land of fancy.

But full soon must she be awakened to the dull reality, for a human hand was laid heavily upon her, and a loud voice roused her, saying:

"Why do you sleep with your doors open here? You'll freeze to death!"

The child started up, thoroughly wakened at once, and, frightened and wondering, cried:

"Margaret! Margaret!"

The woman pointed to a drift of snow, which had gathered in the middle of the room, and said, by way of explanation, that she might calm the child's fears:

"Your door was open, and I saw there was no fire on the hearth, and I thought I'd look in and see if anybody lived here. Why, child, you'd ha' froze stark and stiff if I hadn't woken ye."

"I'm very cold," replied Ellen, her voice only raised above a whisper; and, lying down again, "Let me sleep till Margaret comes; she went to get some bread!"

"Where is your ma, child?"

"Dead!" replied Ellen, mechanically.

"Where is your pa, then? Is he dead too?"

"No; he went away and left us this morning."

"When is he coming back? What are you going to do? You'll freeze to death here!"

"No, I shan't freeze. Margaret will come; he isn't coming at all!" said the child, impatiently, her eyelids growing heavier every moment.

"She'll die here, that's plain!" thought the woman; "she shall go home with me."

No sooner was this determination formed than she proceeded to carry it into effect. Wrapping the unresisting child in her own shawl, she shook her soundly, so as fully to awaken her, and said, or rather screamed, in her ear:

"Come, I'm going to take you home with me, where there's a good fire and plenty to eat! Come on, for it's getting dark, and I've work yet to do to-night!"

"But where'll Maggy go?" asked Ellen, now quite awake. "Who'll feed and warm her?"

"If she comes back and finds you not here, she'll go to one of the neighbours and stay over night," replied the woman, hurrying away. "Now see how fast you can walk; I'll bring you back to-morrow."

With this assurance she walked away with Nelly very rapidly, further into the suburbs of the city.

And the next morning—why did she not redeem her promise? Why, for days and days,

in consequence of a dreadful cold taken that night from her exposure to the storm (for she had walked the long distance without shawl or cloak, having wrapped her thin blanket covering about Ellen), she was confined to the house and to her bed with sickness!

The child at first cried a great deal when she found the woman could not go with her back to her home, but when she saw how sick the poor creature was, and heard her cough so dreadfully, she ceased urging her every moment to take her back again.

When, at last, the poor woman was able to creep out into the street, the first place to which she directed her steps was to the house where she had found the little girl, and—it was burned to the ground!

This woman was a widow and childless, and of good and tender heart; but here the similarity between her and Margaret's protectress ended. It is needless to say she never saw, nor even heard of, the inquiries which were published respecting the little girl who had fallen to her care. Destiny seemed to exert a powerful hand in ordering the respective places of those children—seemed to have established them immutably in stations of life wider and surer than are the Poles.

There were two or three of the dead woman's friends who came to the burial. The coffin was carried to the grave by their husbands, and Nelly followed the corpse, a mourner full of sorrow.

There was a clergyman, a poor man, too, and he prayed long and earnestly over the grave when the coffin was hid in the ground; he prayed for THE CHILD OF THE WIDOW. He was right, though he did not know the relationship existing between the sobbing girl and the dead. She was even as a child, and she mourned the loss of her mother!

That funeral day was the darkest, saddest day the poor girl had ever known. Life seemed to her but one long path leading through darkness, and as she went from the graveyard with the toiling women, holding fast the good minister's hand, she wished with all the eagerness of her young heart that she also might speedily be laid to rest there, never to waken again.

It was summer-time, but the day was very gloomy. The sky was dark with clouds, not a bird's song was to be heard, and the low, deep tones of the wind sounded like a heavy sigh breathed over the earth.

Ellen went home from the burial with one of the poor women, who would not hear of her going back again to the lonely place where she had lived. For several weeks she remained there, sick with grief and long watching. During that time, in compliance with her wish, Mrs. Graham was seeking to obtain for her a place in the house of one of the women who employed her occasionally.

CHAPTER VII.

NELLY is thirteen years old now; she may look upon herself as her own mistress, for there is no one who has any natural claims upon her. To youth the thought of independence is a darling, preciously cherished one, but it is difficult for anyone who has not been circumstantially as was little Nelly, to conceive what wretchedness there was in the knowledge that there were none to guide, none to counsel, none to aid her, as she stood about to embark on the stormy waters of an untried life.

She must work, henceforth—ah, reader, do you know what that means? Not as she had oftentimes toiled before—to help her protector, to aid her in her labours. It must be in a far different manner. She must go to place in a family of which she knew nothing, truly speaking—must serve as a servant there. She was very young, a stranger to the ways of those with whom she would live. Her employers would think it was their lot to have bear much because of her ignorance and unskillfulness; but she, poor young thing, would she not also have to bear much? Would they care to think if she were ever pleased or gratified; would the tastes

of the little servant-girl be ever held in consideration? would they think of her as human? She must bear and suffer, and a dangerous experiment it would prove to speak out in her own behalf, even when wrongfully abused; she must be always faithful and enduring, and the hope of the reward of a kind word from her dear old friend who could never again smile on her, and encourage her, and tell her if she was doing well—even that was denied her.

Nelly had quite recovered from her illness, and was beginning to cherish more cheerful thoughts of the future, for Mrs. Graham was sure of finding her a situation in the house of one of her employers. One night when she came home, her day's work well accomplished, there was a broader smile on her face than usual, and warmer emphasis in the kiss she gave the little girl.

"I've good news for you, child!" she whispered, and then went bustling about the house, preparing supper for her good man, and the boys.

When their wants were supplied, and they had gone out again into the street, some of them to their labour, and Mrs. Graham was at last seated, and making preparations for a fine smoke, Nelly could restrain her curiosity no longer.

Drawing a little bench close beside the old woman, she sat resting her head on her knee, and saying:

"You've got a good place for me, mammy, I know you have; and I'm to go to some lady's house to live?"

"Yes, child, it's just so; but I wish I was to keep you for my own! A girl is more of a comfort to a hard-working woman like me, when I sit down of a night to rest, than a pack of romping boys is. You've made the old place look quite cheerful like, since you've been here, Nelly, by your handy ways."

"But you have been so kind to me! You have got me a place where I can do for myself, and not be a burden to anybody. You are all the friend I have—oh, I shall think of you very, very often, and I'll come to see you when they let me out, and you'll go to the graveyard where SHE is, sometimes, won't you, mammy?"

"Yes, child! yes, always when you want me. And I tell you it will be a pleasure to see your pretty face here often—you'll be more merry, though, when you go up to the fine house where I've got a place for you."

"I hope it isn't very great," murmured the child. "What'll I have to do there, do you think?"

"I spect what they'll want o' you most is, to tend door, and wait on 'em. They're a nice kind of people, and not stingy—a kind o' live and let live sort of folks. You'll suit, I know, if you try. And you will try?"

"Yes, mammy, it shan't be my fault if they're not pleased. But I know they'll never care for me as you have cared, and as she did."

"Well, child, I'll tell you what—tain't their nature to," was Mrs. Graham's comforting assurance; "rich folks ain't like poor folks any how; it takes the poor to FEEL. I don't know as it's their fault, either. If they could only change places with us kind of folks for once, they'd know more'n they do now. But it's a kind of comfort to know that every house has its cupboard of bones!"

With this family, in whose employ Mrs. Graham secured a place for Nelly, she remained more than a year. Kind, good-hearted people, as the old woman had foretold, they were, and the comforts of life became more familiarly known to the little waiting-maid there than they had ever been before. The duties imposed upon her were few and light, and they were always well performed, and Nelly Wood gave general satisfaction in the large household in which she was employed.

But soon after the twelvemonth of her residence there had expired, the body of servants were at once dismissed, the house shut up, and, without any explanation, its owners departed for parts unknown.

"Never mind, dear," said the friendly Mrs. Graham, when Ellen turned to her for counsel,

"I was thinking some time ago of a place better than the one you've had, and I've spoke to the lady, 'cause I heerd the folks up in the big house you lived in was going to quit."

And Ellen's guide was successful in this effort to serve the friendless girl also; for in a few days she was accompanying her to the new place of service.

The heart of Nellie failed her as she thought of the kind people with whom she had lived, and of the strangers to whom she was now going; and closely did she clasp the hand of the aged labouring woman as though she feared parting with her, assuring her more than a dozen times that she would come often back to visit her and the children.

Mrs. Graham seemed to know what was going on in the mind of the girl; for, as they passed through the neatly-gravelled walk, which was bordered with many flowers, to the kitchen door, she whispered to Nelly:

"Never mind; don't be afraid. I'll stay till you get acquainted a little. You'll like these folks."

"This is the girl your-mistress engaged," she said, in explanation to one of the servants, when they entered the basement. "How is your lady this morning?"

"Poorly," answered the other; "I fear she's not long for this world."

"I'm sorry, poor creature; she's so young, and good, and handsome."

"Yes, it is too bad. The doctors say she hasn't no disease—it's a decline like; just kind o' sinking away as one sinks to sleep."

"Maybe she wouldn't care to see Nelly just now?" asked Mrs. Graham, looking toward the door, and still standing.

"I think not," replied the servant, kindly; "but you can leave her here, and toward noon, when the lady likes, I'll go up with her—it's a pity you should lose half a day's work waiting."

Ellen turned quickly toward her friend, as though she would implore her to stay; but she did not speak.

"What is it, dear? Shall I stay?" asked Mrs. Graham.

"No, no!" answered Ellen; "go now, because you must; but do come in for a minute to-night, if this place is in your way."

"Yes, I'll come, if it's miles out of my way, darling; it'll be only a few hours afore I'll be here to-night." Having said this, she hastened away to her labours.

Ellen sat in the kitchen the greater part of the morning, assisting the servants, and winning the best opinions by her kind and obliging manners. At last the message came, saying that the mistress desired the new waiting-maid's appearance; and, notwithstanding the experience she had already had, it was with a fearful heart that she obeyed the call.

As she entered the chamber of the invalid, her step was slow, and her eye downcast, but when Ellen heard the lady's voice speaking so kindly and encouragingly, she raised her eyes, and it seemed to her that she stood in the presence of some good genii, who had at a word, and stroke, created the beautiful place in which she was.

The large windows of the apartment were thrown open, but the blaze of sunlight was shut out from the room by outer and inner blinds. Many vases of freshly gathered flowers filled the pleasant place with their sweet perfume, and the white furniture, the delicate tinted carpet, all conspired to make the sick lady's prison house a delightful one, the very shrine of purity and beauty.

The lady was reclining on a sofa when Ellen entered the room; near her was a cradle, and an infant, the young girl thought the most beautiful in the world, was sleeping it.

"Come and sit down by me," said the sick woman, kindly, when the servant had left her with the mistress, and, with a slow step and timid manner, Ellen approached to the cushioned bench pointed out to her.

"You are young," said the lady, "younger than I had thought—do you think you will be able to aid me much in taking care of my little one?"

"Oh, yes, I'm sure—I'll try, ma'am," answered Ellen, concluding her reply in a bashful tone, *far* unlike the eager, happy manner with which she had commenced it.

"How old are you, my?"

"Almost—no, a little more'n fourteen."

"And have you ever lived out before my child?"

"Yes, ma'am, a little over a twelvemonth; but there wasn't many children at Mrs. Gray's."

"Do you think you will like it here, then, if you know nothing about taking care of children?"

"Oh, but I'll learn very soon. Mrs. Gray thought me quick at learning the ways of her house—and I love your little baby."

Between a mistress so kind as this new one, and a servant so tractable and good as Ellen, there was no prospect of dissatisfaction or injustice on the one hand, or neglect or ingratitude on the other. "The baby" was the pet with both, and the relations they bore to each other precluded all possibility of jealousy on either side, in the attention and love they each lavished on her.

Every week an evening was spent by Ellen with her old friend, Mrs. Graham, when the excellencies of the infant, the beauty, and patience, and kindness of the mistress, and the pleasantness of her new situation, were never failing topics to all which, as the young girl discoursed so eloquently upon them, her hostess lent a willing ear. Every day Ellen was growing in grace and beauty, and her mind was improving also, under the instructions of her invalid-mistress, and her poor friend, with a sigh, was forced to surrender one hope she had cherished, that her son Willie might some day win Nellie for his wife—for he, poor fellow, was proving but a sorry clown, and she, to Mrs. Graham's eyes, seemed almost as much a lady as the daughters of the great folks who lived in the fine houses.

In the burial ground, which lay in the neighbourhood of this old woman's home, there was one grave which, when the weather permitted, was visited regularly one day in every seven by Nellie Wood and her friend. And among a hundred neglected graves that were marked by no headstone, and no care of surviving relatives, there was one which was made very conspicuous by the green and well-kept sod, and the flowers which, during the spring and summer and autumn months, were found blooming there. It was a sacred place to both those hearts who visited it so often, and they never turned from the else so dismal graveyard without an inward assurance that they had been made better, more patient, more charitably disposed toward the world, by their momentary rest in the solemn place. Gratefully, most gratefully, was the memory of the dead friend cherished by the orphan girl, and it was one of her proudest hopes that some day she might erect a tombstone there to the memory of her beloved dead.

The summer months passed away, the dreary autumn rains set in, and the cheerfulness which had, during the warm, sunshiny weather, marked the invalid, disappeared; she seemed lost in gloomy thought, which the presence of her husband, who was devoted in his attentions, failed to brighten or remove.

During the day the little nurse was usually her sole companion, and the gentle manners of Nelly, her affection for the child so much entrusted to her care, her beauty, and craving for knowledge, made her an object of more than common interest to the sick lady. One dark day, when the books were laid aside, the baby asleep, and the stillness to the invalid was becoming intolerable, with a sort of vague, listless curiosity, she turned to Ellen, asking, abruptly:

"When you first came here, I think they told me you were an orphan—that you have no father or mother living? How sad it must be to be an orphan!"

"It is too true. Mother died long, long ago. I do not remember her at all. Father I can just remember, and that is all."

"Where did he live? Do you remember his last sickness?"

"He was not ill—he did not die THEN—he left us a great, great while ago, and I never have seen him since."

"Was he poor?"

"Yes, ma'am, **very** poor."

"But you said us, he left us; were there many of you?"

"Only my sister and I. Sometimes I have thought he was not our father, or he would not have deserted us, leaving us without a morsel to eat, and we had no money to get food."

"I should have thought you had forgotten all this, for you **must** have been very young. But your sister has told you often, I suppose."

"I have no sister now," answered Ellen, sadly; "she, too, is dead, or was lost long ago. I am alone in the world."

"Dead! lost!" repeated the invalid, and rising on the sofa, she examined more closely than before the features of the young girl. "Pray, then, what became of you when you lost her?"

"A poor woman took me—she found me half-dead with cold and hunger—she gave me a home."

"The one who brought you here?"

"No," answered Ellen, and the remembrance of all that friend had been for her brought tears into her eyes; "she died before I ever went out to service."

"Was she kind to you, child?"

"She was my mother—I lost my all when she died."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the lady, and her head was buried in the pillows of the lounge, and for many moments there was dead silence in the room. Then she roused herself, sitting up again. She beckoned to Ellen, and said in a trembling whisper: "Come close up to me—put your arms about my neck, and tell me your name! It is not Jarvis, it is something else! Come, come, quick, if you are Ellen—Nelly Wood—come!"

And she stretched out her arms as though she would clasp Ellen to her breast.

With a glad cry:

"It is that—Nelly Wood—yes, it is that—oh, I have tried so many, many times to think what that name was; and you, you **ARE** Margaret—my Margaret?" exclaimed the little waiting-maid, as she flung herself beside the lounge and sobbed aloud.

But Margaret did not answer, did not hear aught save the first quick reply, "It is THAT," she had faintly quite away.

When, after the glad child's repeated exertions to arouse her sister, Margaret's eyes at last opened, and beheld the slight form of the dear little Nelly bending over her, she whispered, lovingly:

"I have prayed and hoped so many times that I might see you and be with you, Nelly, for but one moment before I die. And lately it has been the only thought I have cherished, that we might meet once more."

"And we shall not ever again be parted, shall we, Margaret? You will love me as when we lived in that poor place—we shall be always together now! shall we? shall we?"

"Yes, always!" repeated Margaret, as again and again she pressed her thin lips to the brow of the happy Ellen; "and you will be well now, Mrs.—Maggy! I will be your doctor, and give you medicines and nurse you, and—"

"Yes! yes! you will be my own dear Nelly. We have both something to live for now. God bless you! God bless you!"

Away with doctors, and their now so needless stuffs! Margaret Lee did not need them after that happy morning; she had discovered a sovereign panacea, such as they had not, such as they could not find—had been aroused from the dream of imagination which had well nigh proved fatal; and now she has quite learned to love the noble young husband who bore so long and patiently with her, and he has for ever taken the place of that unholy worshipped idol that was once enthroned on a lofty pedestal in her young heart.

That white-robed bed-chamber bears no resemblance now to the chamber of death. There are roses blooming brightly on the face of the

beautiful wife, as on your own, my gentle reader, and I doubt if there are many happier homes on earth than the home of Richard Lee.

CHAPTER VIII.

Let the curtain be drawn aside once more. Another scene before we part.

What, another exhibition of misery? Yes! look on the miser's death-bed!

You see him lying on that heap of straw, the grey-haired old man, whose life has long been devoted to that one unhallowed object—the gathering of gold. He is dying. There is but one to stand beside his death-bed and watch as the spark of life flickers away. There is but one to close his eyes when his cold heart shall have stilled its beatings. But, alas! there is not even one to weep when he is gone! There are none to miss him by the fireside—none to whom the world will seem less beautiful when he is laid aside—none to whom his bent form is an object of love and reverence—none in whom he has inspired other than one feeling, that of intense disgust and fear!

He who stands by him and watches the departing, does so with no sympathizing, loving eyes. His whole soul revolts from the duty which devolves upon him.

"Now mind," said the old man, speaking slowly, and striving to rise in his bed; "mind what I've said. Just as quick as ever I'm dead, do what I've told ye. You're the only being I ever trusted—mind you don't deceive me! If you do, I'll haunt you all your life, and make you pay more for the cursed gold than it's all worth."

They are his last words. You see he has fallen back; he is quite dead!

The gentleman who has watched the miser's last moments is bending over him. He feels his hand—it is cold. He listens—the heart has stopped its beating! No breath comes from the nostrils—yes, he is DEAD! Let the curtain drop—it has descended on him for ever more.

The watcher descended from the chamber of death—his face bore witness to the terrible scene he had beheld—he was eager to be away from the house that contained even the mortal remains of such a spirit. Giving some money to the man and woman whom he met at the foot of the stairs, he said to them calmly:

"Prepare him for burial to-morrow at two o'clock. I will be in attendance at that hour."

And he passed out.

In a few days every leading paper in the city of — contained an announcement that the two children of the late Joshua Wood, named Margaret and Ellen Wood, of the respective ages of — and — years, would hear something greatly to their advantage by applying at the office of Benjamin Hayes, 80, Chestnut Street.

The old miser had starved himself, and left to the children he deserted in their helplessness, a fortune, amounting to fifty thousand pounds; and a portion of that money, which the old man loved so well, has built a home for the orphaned, the deserted, the poor, and the destitute, where a multitude of weak and helpless ones have learned to bless the names of the miser's noble children.

And the days of Mrs. Graham's labour and care on earth are over now; for Ellen Wood never forgot who, under Providence, had befriended her and led her to the home of her sister Margaret.

But not alone in the homes of the living has her presence been seen and felt. A certain, well-kept, well-remembered grave, perpetuates in the world the name of one whose deed of charity, albeit she was poor and despised on this earth, has doubtless, ere this, been rewarded in heaven. For the voice whose decree no man can revert has surely said unto her:

"Friend, come up higher."

[THE END.]

In the ten years since its discovery the telephone has come into use in all civilized countries, and some of the semi-civilized.



[“IF YOU WANT ANYTHING TO KEEP THE COLD OUT, MESSUS, YOU HAD BETTER GET DOWN.”]

THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER.

A TRUE STORY.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

By HAL LOWTHER.

CHAPTER I.

“HUSH, my darling, hush!” and the speaker folded a baby closer to her bosom. “Have we far to go now?” she asked, speaking to a huddled-up form close beside her; but the only response to her question was a disturbed growl from the human bundle in the corner sleeping off the effects of drink.

An old-fashioned waggon was lumbering over the heavy road, with its broad wheels crunching the hard stones mercilessly, as they passed slowly along to the tinkle of the horses’ collar-bells. The fore part of the waggon was devoted to parcels and packages of various kinds, whilst a portion at the back was set apart for the use of passengers unable to afford the luxury of travelling by coach, for our story opens in the latter days of those good old times when gas was scarce and rushlights plentiful.

There were four passengers—the woman with the infant already mentioned, a little girl, and a man sleeping uneasily in the most comfortable corner.

“What a night!” said the woman. “Are you warm?” she added, as she felt for the little girl nestling close beside her; “come near to me, pet, and put your head under my shawl.”

The action of stretching out her hand disturbed the child at her breast, and it uttered a plaintive whine, as if in pain.

“Sissey here is very ill. Oh!” she added, in a troubled voice, “if we were only at some place where we could get relief for her!”

And so they lumbered sluggishly along through the pattering rain and the gusts of wind.

“Woah!” shouted the driver from the front. “Last stop but one, thank goodness! If you want anything to keep the cold out, missus, you had better get down. We stop here a few minutes.”

The man peeped through the opening in the canvas at the back, and, without waiting for a reply, entered the wayside inn.

The sudden stoppage roused the sleeping husband, who threw off his blanket of straw, and, rising, shook himself after the manner of a Newfoundland dog just out of the water.

A stable-light swinging from the canvas roof showed him to be a tall man, with a prematurely old look about him. Dissipation had made him a complete wreck, yet there was a military air and a trace of elegant manners visible through his general bearing, which at once told of better days and early luxury.

He fumbled vacantly in each of his pockets, and, finding nothing there but a faded handkerchief and a pair of soiled gloves, muttered:

“By Jove! a night like this, and not a coin left!”

“I’m so cold and hungry, ma,” whispered the little girl.

“Hush, my darling! we shall soon be at our journey’s end,” said the mother, in a soothing tone. “Your da has spent all our money; he has given it, you know, to the carrier to let us ride,” she added, as if anxious to screen her husband as much as possible.

“Cold and hungry!” he muttered again, reproachfully. “I’ll try the inn, and I’ll bring you something if there’s a human heart or credit in the place,” and he descended from the waggon.

“Lost, lost!” sighed the wife as he departed, “and I dread to think what the end will be! My poor children!” and the tears rose to her eyes as she clasped her little ones closer to her form, as if to shield them from some impending danger!

The feeble light shone on her wan face, which though white and worn with suffering and sickness, still bore evidence how beautiful she must have been once.

The ostlers were attending to the horses, and

the bells jingled as loudly as ever as they shook the rain-drops from their shaggy manes. Weakly candles, shrouded in stable-lanterns, glimmered here and there. Heavy forms, armed with wisps of hay or straw, moved about in lumpy haste, their voices sounding hoarse in the thick, damp air; and so the time went on. Wait, wait! The rain still pattered and the drops ticked off the seconds, which rapidly grew into minutes. At last the carrier returned, and, glancing through the opening, said, in a surly voice, as he jerked his head in the direction of the inn:

“He’s a cure, he is missus! He’s fallen in wi’ jolly company, and he don’t seem anxious to move. See if ye can get him away, for I’m past my time now, and if he don’t come I mun go on wi’out him.”

The poor wife started, but, bidding the little girl remain, she at once sought the inn.

As she passed the door her heart chilled as she heard a burst of drunken laughter and her husband singing a humorous song! He had found his way to an inner room and forgotten all about her and the children.

She clutched her child closer as, half fainting, she fell against the settle which divided the kitchen and passage like a wooden wall.

The landlady appeared—a grim, gaunt woman with hard features and a stony voice. Her face grew harder than ever, as she saw the poor woman’s faded and helpless appearance.

“And pray,” she asked, in flinty tones, “what may you want?”

“Water, water!” was the gasping answer.

“Water?” echoed the woman. “And do you think I keep my house open to serve water? There’s a pump outside, and I make you free of it, ma’am—”

“For God’s sake, have pity at least on my poor child!” and the baby unconsciously added to its mother’s pleading voice with a series of moans.

“A baby, too! Oh, indeed! I shall be asked next to turn my house into a hospital. There! I’ve no time to waste with you. I pay rates and taxes, so be off as you came!”

"God forgive you, and my husband, too!" she signed, as she moved towards the door.

By this time she was aware the little girl had left the waggon. Creeping to her mother and putting her arms round her skirts, she said:

"Don't cry, ma, and I won't be cold or hungry any more!"

And so they leaned against the wall, a hopeless, sorrowful group, as another burst of merriment burst from the inner room.

Presently, the door opened, and her husband appeared, flushed with drink, while from the open doorway the fire flung its ruddy glow upon the poor mother's pallid face; but his drunken smile changed to a look of frozen horror when the ostler announced, with a look of pity towards the poor, sinking mother, that the carrier, losing all patience, had been gone some time!

At this juncture the landlady bustled back, with her face clouded and her heart padlocked, and with her own hands pushed them out into the storm's chilling embrace.

And there they stood in the cheerless night, with the rain pelting and the wind raving and reeling around them in a drunken kind of revelry.

Suddenly, as the last spark of hope was dying in the wife's heart, she became aware of a rough form creeping cautiously towards her. It was the ostler, who said, as soon as he reached them, whispering his words out hurriedly:

"She's a hard un to turn you out a night like this; but thank God! we ain't all on us alike. I'll tell ye what I'll do, mum, for the sake o' the babbies—mine's dead and gone!" said the man, with a sudden drop in his voice. Then, after a pause, added, "There's a clean, comfortable barn, wi' plenty of straw in it. Come w' me, and I'll put you in if you'll only promise to be off before daybreak."

The wife sobbed out a faint "God bless you, sir!" for the husband, swaying to and fro, with his senses drowned in liquor, was unconsciously humming the snatch of a humorous chorus.

The ostler was as good as his word, for, with a covert look of contempt at the drunkard, he led the way to the barn, spread out the bundles of straw, brought a couple of thick horse-cloths, and, after furnishing them with some oat-cake and warm ale, went supperless to bed, to be rewarded with the faces of his dead children smiling at him through his dreams that night!

CHAPTER II.

COMPLETELY worn out, mother and children slept soundly; but the father's slumbers were broken every now and again with incoherent snatches of song, as if his muddled brain was under the impression that he was still among his sottish companions; and once, in a state of maudlin imbecility, he uttered the words, perfectly unconscious of the satire, "May the present moment be the worst of our lives!"

Before the promised time the mother was stirring, and, having roused her husband, who had not slept away the fumes, they renewed their journey on foot.

The mother clutching her sick child to her breast, infusing all the warmth she could into its little limbs; the girl clinging closely to her skirts, and bravely resolving not to be "cold or hungry again;" while the father brought up the rear, surging along as unsteadily as if he had been a boat in a rough sea towed by an invisible rope.

Plied, plod, weary onward!

The weather was even worse than before; the rain had hardened into pellets of snow. The wind, too, as if maddened by its wild revels, seemed, as it were, to have gone out of its mind altogether; it danced around trees, making them unwilling partners, sometimes grasping a poor consumptive sapling, and galloping it off in a high state of frenzied glee, settling down in the end to a glorious game of battle-door with the hailstones.

At last the first streak of morning shone out as if it were the finger of God pointing to the towers and steeples of a town.

Houses soon grew around them, and they had

just passed the outskirts of the town when a woman-tramp came full upon them. She paused on the threshold of her pilgrimage, and, after looking intently for a few moments at the mother and her burden, accosted her with:

"Been tramping through this weather, missus?"

A weary nod was the only reply.

"And such a night, too—not used to it either!" she added critically. "Child ill, missus?" she asked, after a pause.

A sigh, and another weary nod for answer.

"See here, missus, you seems half dead yourself; and no wonder, out a night such as this has been. I ain't in a hurry; I'll turn back, and carry your child."

A tear in the mother's eye rose to thank her, but the offer was declined.

"Can I do nothing to help you, missus?"

"Which is the way to the workhouse? I want a—"

But the tramp burst through her word with:

"My God, missus, don't go there! The prison's better than—"

She paused as she saw the other one's startled look and shrinking horror, and quietly pointed to a large building in the distance.

"I must go there," said the mother, faintly. "I want a doctor for my child!"

The man had wandered slowly on, and was waiting under the shelter of a house half asleep.

"Well, you know best, missus; but I knows which o' the two I prefers!" She paused again, then said, "Keep straight on; you can't miss it. I won't keep you any longer; I know" (she sighed) "I ain't company for such as you!"

As she spoke this slowly and sadly, her eyes rested on the little girl, and her hand wandered instantly to her pocket; but, stopping suddenly, she muttered:

"I forgot; I gave the last I had to him for beer and bacoy! Good-bye, missus; I wish you'd ha' let me carry—. But there, I wish you better luck, missus!"

She drew her thin shawl shivering about her, stooped down, kissed the moaning baby, then with a faint "God help you!" went upon her way with the sunshine of a mother's blessing following in her wake!

The storm had somewhat abated by the time they stood before the workhouse in the damp, grey morning light.

What a look of misery, blended with a kind of prison grimness, the place had! The walls were wet and clammy; and, remembering the tramp's horror when the very name of workhouse was mentioned, it almost seemed as if the tears of the inmates were oozing through the soft-hearted stones!

The husband shrunk into a corner and dozed, heedless of the misery so near him. His wife approached the gateway, in which was a sullen-faced door, studded, as it were, with rusty freckles. With a nervous twitch she applied her hand to a long bell-pull, and a faint, cracked tinkle was the result of the action.

A dreary wait, with only the wind and drizzle for company.

Then came a shuffling of feet, a slow fumbling at the lock, and a fragment of the door opened, showing a withered old man standing in the gap. He was dressed in a faded suit of wrinkled moleskin, with a wrinkled moleskin face to match.

"Well?" he asked, in a harsh voice.

"I want a doctor to see my child!" she said, faintly.

"Where's your order?"

"Order?" echoed the mother.

"Yes—order."

"Order! Respect the chair!" muttered the sleepy father from his corner.

"If you haven't got one you'd better come back at ten o'clock," said the man of moleskin. "Ten o'clock! We are homeless, sir, and my child will die before then," she answered, in a tone of terror.

"Well, I don't know, I'm sure, poor things!" —the voice was not near so harsh now—"I'm afraid it's hopeless, but I'll wake the overseer

and try what can be done." And the fragment of a door closed again.

Wait—wait!

"Now then, you, what's all this?" and, as the door re-opened, the voice fell on the mother's heart like ice.

"We are starving, sir."

"So are hundreds of others, but that's no reason why I should be dragged out of my warm bed at this time of the morning. Where's your order?"

"We have none."

"You must come again when the Board meets."

"But my child is ill—very, very ill!"

"That's the doctor's business—not mine."

"But this is MY OWN PARISH!"

"Then where's your certificate of birth? Must abide by the rules!"

"Rule Britannia!" hiccupped the husband, vacantly. "Britons never shall be slaves!"

"Rules!" said the mother, in a voice that went through every heart near like a death-shaft. "Your rules have killed my child, for look, my God, it's dead!"

On, those dear old times!

CHAPTER III.

It was the third day after these events.

The weather had changed completely, and all trace of the storm had vanished, and though there was a frosty chill in the air, yet the day was fine and bracing. The wind had recovered from its delirium, and went about almost caressingly, as if apologizing in the most abject manner for its late rudeness.

The afternoon was pretty well advanced, and the traffic in the main street of the town was here and there stopped, as drivers paused abruptly, passengers came to a dead stand, and shopkeepers peeped from their doors, to witness a pauper funeral!

There was a long deal box of sable hue on four wheels, which the parochial authorities called a hearse; it looked as if it was jolted over the stones as if every lurch had a sacrilegious intent to fling the pauper burden into the public street.

No ceremony of woe there. No nodding plumes, no glistening panels embellished with mournful yew-trees or weeping angels. No jet-black steeds in sorrowful-looking harness, no mutes, no following friends with handkerchiefs of spotless white set in black frames and held to tearless eyes—no pomp of grief whatever, but simply, a driver with a rusty cape-cloak over a moleskin suit, a gaunt horse trailing along at a limp trot the said deal box, with a little girl as the only mourner, sobbing bitterly as she ran to keep up behind the parochial hearse!

Think! A child, in the broad day, allowed to follow, as best it could, a pauper hearse; and then sign for those good old times!

At last they reached the parish churchyard, and this mockery of a funeral stopped at an iron gateway.

It was a dreary-looking place. True, the higher portion was well kept, and boasted tombs and monumental tributes, interspersed now and again with patches of flowers and decorated mounds; but all around the gate, where the vehicle stopped, had a barren appearance. There were no daisies or forget-me-nots there—only bald heaps of crusted earth which had all the seeming of peculiarly-shaped warts. If you came across a stray patch of grass, it had a yellow and seared look about it suggesting at once the impoverished state of the soil, and you felt instinctively that the paupers' corner was rich only in damp clay and hungry worms.

The sight had attracted a crowd of loiterers.

The sexton saw the arrival, and, in the most leisurely way possible, brought his helpers to carry the coffins—for there were two (one full-sized and the other a baby's)—to their final resting-place.

The driver descended when this had been done, and, approaching the little girl, patted her kindly as he whispered:

"Will you come back with me? If you will,

I'll wait. They can only stop my allowance. What do you say, eh?"

"Please, sir," the child sobbed. "I'll stay with them."

"But, dearie, you can't stay when they're in the ground," said the kind-hearted old driver. "You'd better come back with me."

"Please sir, I'll stay with sissy and ma!"

"I don't know what to do, I'm sure," said the driver, hopelessly. "Well," he added, after a pause, "if you will stay, of course, you will; so you'd better give me your cloak;" and he took from the child's shoulders a black cloak of the same material and made as his own. Then, bending down, he touched her forehead with his shrivelled lips, and said, as he turned away, "You're sure to find your way back when it's over," while the child, released, made off to the new-made grave.

At this moment a middle-aged couple, who had been silently watching the scene through the railings, approached, as if by mutual consent, and stopped the driver.

"I beg pardon," said the gentleman, who was a little well-dressed man, "I beg your pardon, but would you kindly tell me the circumstances of that poor child?"

"I'm over my time already, sir," said the driver, hastily scanning the pair; "but if you can befriend her I'll risk that."

"Was that her mother—"

"And sister," said the driver, filling up the sentence.

The motherly little woman turned suddenly away.

"Is she an orphan?" asked the little man.

"Almost," replied the driver.

"What do you mean?" questioned the little man, earnestly. "Has she a father, then?"

"Yes."

The motherly little woman turned round again, looking disappointedly at her husband—for it needed no keen observation to see at a glance they were man and wife.

"Humph!" he muttered, and took a sharp turn up and down of about a dozen yards, then saying:

"Where is her father?"

"At a lodging-house in Kent Street, drunk!" was the blunt reply. "Oh, no, he isn't, for here he comes," continued the driver, as he saw a tall form straggling through the gates.

The middle-aged pair turned in that direction, and as they did so looked at each other significantly.

The driver gave a sad look towards the gate, then touched his hat to the little pair, and, after receiving a silver coin from the little man, hurried towards his horse, waiting at the gate and champing at its bit as if it were devouring in imagination an unexpected banquet of delicious corn!

Meanwhile, the tall form made its way to the grave side in a somewhat slow and unsteady manner.

The middle-aged pair followed.

"Too late to see the last of 'em!" said the sexton, grimly, for by this time the damp clay had been heaped upon both coffins, and another mound was added to the number there.

"Too late!" echoed the tall form, with a maudlin attempt at grief.

"Beg your pardon, sir!" said the little man, softly—"Your wife?"

"Wife and child!" said the tall form, burying his face in a faded handkerchief.

"Dear me! very sad!" was the sympathizing response.

"Sad!" cried the form, with its face still buried. "My child died at the workhouse doors, and the shock killed my wife; and all I held dear upon earth now lies within a pauper's grave! The shock killed my wife, and has struck at the root of my life!"

"Then is not the little girl yours, sir?"

The face was unburied in an instant.

"Oh, yes!" said the tall form, in a tone of surprise which left no doubt on the minds of those present that he had forgotten his daughter's very existence. "She is my child—the only one left me now!"

"I wish we could speak to you in private, sir."

The tall man looked at the little pair searchingly, and even his half-dazed vision could see there was an air about them which plainly bespoke people well-to-do in the world.

"I am at your service," he said. He gave a look at the grave, drew himself up to his full height, and, as if by that manly effort he had conquered his grief, he led the way out of the churchyard as unsteadily as he had entered it.

The little man looked again significantly at his wife, and followed.

She, with all the tenderness of a kind and motherly nature in her voice, put her arm around the lonely little girl, as she asked:

"Would you like to go home with me, my dear?"

"Home!" answered the girl, as if not understanding the word.

"Yes, dear, to my home—to be my child?"

But the girl only sobbed, by way of reply.

"There now! don't, my darling; but come with me—at least, till your father can settle something. Our home is close by—warm and bright and comfortable; besides, the night is coming on; and see, your father and my husband are waiting for you. Come! come, trust yourself to me!" And the kind-hearted woman led the child from the grave side, sobbing as if her heart would break.

"We shall be private there," said the little man, with a meaning glance; "eh, Corry?"

"I know a quiet publichouse—" said the tall form; but the little man instantly interrupted with:

"No, no; our house is the proper place, and it is very near to here, so please to follow me;" and as he spoke he moved away, with a little, short step, and the group left the graveyard at once.

In a short time the house of the middle-aged couple was reached. It was a bright and cheerful home!

The table was set for tea. The curtains were drawn; the lamp was unlit, but a huge red fire threw out a ruddy glow which shed a brightening influence on all around. There was no attempt at grandeur; but a cosy air of solid and homely comfort hung about the place. The furniture and pictures were all in excellent keeping there; but no picture was more fitted to the room than the comfortable and happy appearance of that middle-aged couple.

The little girl was asleep on a couch, drawn up to the fire, watched over by the motherly little woman.

"And now," said the little man, "I have, I hope, explained everything to your satisfaction. We are managers of the theatre here. Our position is well known and respected. We saw your daughter accidentally. We also saw her misery and the wonderful likeness she bears to our lost little one, and instantly conceived the idea of adopting her. The sum of money named shall be given on condition that you give her over to us to be brought up and loved as we would have done our own had she lived." The little man paused as he heard a faint sob from his wife, and patted her kneeling form, then continued, abruptly: "What do you say—our love and home, or your wandering, uncertain way of life for your child?"

The tall man had been so startled by the proposal that he was by this time almost sober, a thing that had only happened to him at rare intervals for months past. He had made up his mind at once.

"I agree for her sake," he said, with an air almost theatrical, "and will go before the darling wakes. I could not bear the scene of parting if she were conscious of it. Now the sacrifice is all my own;" and the faded handkerchief was brought into use again, but, as before, remained unstained with a single tear.

"Here then," said the little man; "sign this paper and there is the money."

The paper was signed and the money placed in an inner pocket.

"I will stay no longer."

He stooped and pressed a slight kiss on the child's lips, who seemed to shiver at the touch and hypocrisay of the act; then, with the door half open, he said:

"Circumstances have, of late years, dealt harshly with me, but never so harshly as now. I will let you know when I have matured my plans for the future. I have served my country!"

This was said with an air of bombastic truth, for he had told the lie so often that at last he himself believed it.

"I could show you medals, or at least the tickets of them, if I had my pocket-book. Adieu! may you watch over my child as I would have done! I will go now and give one parting look at her mother's grave, and then depart from this place so fraught with me with sorrow and suffering. Farewell!"

He passed away from sight, but though he had come direct from the churchyard he did not find his way there, but mistook the road and found himself in a publichouse instead.

"Look, John," said the motherly little form, when they were alone with the sleeping child. "Don't you see HER face again—so pale—so beautiful and patient? But, oh! will she learn to love us?"

"If tenderness and love will make her do it, no doubt she will," said the little husband, soothingly.

The child woke and stared about half frightened.

"Don't be alarmed, my pet," said the little woman as she drew the scared face to her breast. "This is now your home; you are to live with us and love us as we will love you—"

"But ma and sissy!" said the child, amidst a flood of tears.

"You will be near them, my child—you shall go to their grave every day;" and she added, in a tone of earnestness and such motherly love that it went at once to the child's heart: "We will try and make the grass grow green and bright over it, and hem it round with such sweet flowers!"

The girl threw her arms about the little woman's neck; the threshold of a new life for both was passed; and that night as the strange form sobbed itself to sleep the little motherly figure knelt by the bedside, and thanked God that the yearning corner of that mother's heart was to be filled again with a new born love which her own lost one's presence had rendered vacant!

INTERESTING FROM BERLIN.—The Ragtag or Landtag, or whatever the Prussian House of Commons is called, was opened, says the "Daily News," "by an altogether unmeaning speech from the throne," which would almost indicate a desire on the part of the king to borrow from our own Parliamentary custom in respect of royal speeches.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD "TAXES."—The word "taxes" is derived from the barbarous Latin word "tallia," or "tallium," which in the ancient signification (says Fortescue) meant a piece of wood, squared and cut into two parts, on each of which they used to mark what was due and owing between debtor and creditor; from thence it came to signify a tribute paid by the vassal to the lord on any important occasion, the particular payments whereof were marked on these pieces of wood, one part being held by the tenant, the other by the lord. In French it is "taille," which originally signified no more than a section or cutting, from the verb "tailler," to cut; but afterwards it came to signify metaphorically a tax, or subsidy: all which words come from the pure Latin word "talea," a cut stick, or tally. From whence is derived our law Latin word "tallagium," or rather "tallagium," which signifies in our law any sort of tax whatsoever. Yet in the feudal law, "talliare" signified the same as "tailler" in French, to limit, or cut; as "talliare feodum" is to limit or curtail a fee-simple, and to reduce and ascertain that general and indefinite estate to more restrained and fixed period of duration; and from thence comes our "feodum tallagium," a fee-tail—that is, an inheritance restrained or limited to such particular heirs only as are set down in the deed of entail.

SCIENCE.

EXERCISE.—Give your brain sufficient food and an abundant supply of oxygen, and then give it a fair amount of good hard work every day, if you wish to maintain it in a high state of healthy activity. Barristers and clergymen, who use their brains much, are the longest-lived men in the country, showing plainly that regular brain work is good for the general health as well as for the efficiency of the nervous system in particular. The muscular system must be treated in a similar manner, if you do not wish it to become subject to fatty degeneration. An unused muscle shrinks, and becomes soft and flabby, presenting an appearance of marked contrast to the brawny arm of the blacksmith. Instances of the feebleness of tissues thus preserved frequently present themselves to the notice of the surgeon. A muscle is called upon to perform a vigorous contraction, but it snaps in the effort. The heart itself is sometimes torn asunder in attempting to send an extra supply of blood to some needy limb. No man can afford to lower his general vitality for the sake of mere idle gratification. He never knows when he may require all the energy which can be stored up in his tissues. A railway accident, a runaway horse, a run to catch a train, a fall on the ice, or even a fit of coughing, may bring a life of misery or an early death to one who would have passed unscathed through them all had he allowed his nerves and muscles to wear away in vigorous activity, instead of carefully preserving them, like smoked bacon, in the fumes of tobacco.—“Knowledge.”

SOME OF THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF ELECTRIC LIGHTING.—An English writer, after describing the baneful effects of gas lamps upon the healthfulness of living rooms, goes on to notice some of the mischief done to books, wares, furniture, and the like. The evil effects of the heat of gas jets is augmented, he says, by the large amount of water produced by the gas flame. Sixty burners will produce, on the lowest computation, two gallons of water per hour; hence in a November evening many large shops filled with delicate goods will have a nine-gallon caskful of water thrown into their atmosphere in the form of steam, to condense on any cool surface, as we often see it trickling down the window in winter. But worse remains behind. The sulphur, always present in gas in larger or smaller proportion according to the character of the coal employed, burns into sulphurous vapour, which passes in the air to the state of oil of vitriol. The eminent chemist, Dr. Prout, exposed water in a drawing-room in which gas was burnt, and found that it absorbed sufficient of these vitriolic emanations to reddish blue litmus and show the presence of free sulphuric acid. The fumes from gas will, indeed, in the long run, discolor every sort of fabric, rust metals, rot gutta percha, and reduce leather (as in the binding of books) to “a scarcely coherent powder with a strongly acid taste.” After referring to the evidence of the librarians of the Athenaeum Club, London Institution, etc., as to the rotting of the bindings of books kept in rooms lighted by gas, the writer says: “Drapers know to their cost how the edges of pieces of dyed fabrics become faded and rotten when kept long on the upper shelves of gas-lighted shops; no plant will grow in a room where gas is burning, and cut flowers quickly wither; while those who work long and habitually in gas-lighted rooms become blanched and sickly. From all these manifold evils electricity will deliver us.”

It is thought by scientists that sufficient electricity for the electric lights on the piers at Coney Island can be generated by the action of the waves.

ANOTHER ELECTRIC RAILWAY.—The second electric railway constructed by Messrs. Siemens and Halske in Berlin was formally opened on April 29th. It runs from Lichtenfelde, a suburban station on the Berlin-Anhalt Railway, to the Military Academy, about one and a half English miles.

FACETIA.

MISS WHYTE.

You're a terrible girl, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

You're a terrible girl, Miss Whyte; All the men in the nation, of every persuasion,

Fall in love with your phiz at first sight, first sight—

Fall in love with your phiz at first sight!

By Jove! you're quite faultless, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

By Jove! you're quite faultless, Miss Whyte;

You aren't a little too tall, or a little too small,

But just as you should be, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

But just as you should be, Miss Whyte!

Your temper's quite charming, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

Your temper's quite charming, Miss Whyte;

Ne'er peevish or hasty, ill-natured or testy, Except now and then, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

Except now and then, Miss Whyte!

You're exceedingly clever, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

You're exceedingly clever, Miss Whyte; Pon my soul, any day, I'd believe what you say,

Though you swore that day was night, Miss Whyte—

Though you swore that day was night?

Search Europe around, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

Search Europe around, Miss Whyte;

And where shall we find a maiden so kind As your own charming self, Miss Whyte,

Miss Whyte,

As your own charming self, Miss Whyte?

You're perfection itself, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

You're perfection itself, Miss Whyte!

For figure and face, good temper and grace, You haven't an equal, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

You haven't an equal, Miss Whyte!

I dream of you often, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

I dream of you often, Miss Whyte; I can't eat my lunch, or tipple my punch, For thinking of lovely Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

For thinking of lovely Miss Whyte.

Compared with yourself, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

Compared with yourself, Miss Whyte, The loveliest she I ever did see,

Was nothing at all but a fright, a fright— Was nothing at all but a fright!

I love you far better, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

I love you far better, Miss Whyte, Than mutton or veal, pork chops or cowheel,

Or anything else, Miss Whyte, Miss Whyte—

Or anything else, Miss Whyte!

If the sun is not an invalid, why does it always go south to spend the winter?

If a young lady is forsaken by her faithless lover, it is no reason why she should be called a cutlass.

A GIRL at boarding-school wrote to her father, who was an eminent lawyer, asking if she “hadn't a right to object to a great horrid dog always taking the whole of the footpath.” The old lawyer wrote back: “You are right in objecting to the principle that the dog is entitled to the whole footpath, but practically, if he wants it, you had better let him have it.”

A SHOCKING DISASTER.—An earthquake.

WHERE do ghosts come from?—From gnome man's land.

A SERIOUS MOVEMENT ON FOOT.—The coming corn or bunion.

WHEN money is “close,” it is not close enough to reach.

A REEL FACT.—The straighter the whisky, the more crooked the walk.

WHAT is more chilling to the ardent lover than the beautiful's no?

DO NOT provoke a fight with an undertaker. There is always a chance that he may lay you out some time.

A DEBATING SOCIETY OUT WEST is discussing the question whether the last snow was a foot deep or twelve inches high.

“I WILL never marry a woman who can't carve,” said M.—“Why?” “Because she would not be a help-meat for me.”

“MR. SWIPES, I've just kicked your William out of doors.” “Well, Mr. Swingle, it's the first bill you've footed this many a day.”

WHY are tailors supposed to be good judges of human nature?—Because they can take any man's measure the first time they see him.

“I AM tired!” said the wheel. “Poor fellow!” exclaimed the axle. “Don't make such a hub-bub!” cried the vehicle, waggon his tongue.

ADDISON'S COUPLET TO A BLOCKHEAD.

You beat your pate, and fancy wit will come: Knock as you please, there's nobody at home.

“SARAH,” said a teacher to one of his pupils, “can you give the definition of a skinner?” “No,” answered Sarah, “but perhaps a cheese mite.”

THE IGNORANT YOUNG MAN who said he wanted to go to college “so as to study a girl called Belle Lettres,” had some natural talent for something, after all.

A SLEEPY HAT.—“Why, Bob, what a sleepy hat you've got!” “Sleepy hat! What do you mean by that?” “Why, it must be sleepy; it is so long since it had a nap!”

A SMART COUNTRY BOY, hearing about burglars raising windows, and about their “plants,” etc., wanted to know “if they planted a pane of glass when they wanted to raise a window?”

“IT IS STRANGE,” said an unsophisticated child, “that everybody gets taffy after they're dead!” “Why, what on earth do you mean?” exclaimed the unsophisticated child's surprised mamma. “I mean epitaph-y,” answered the unsophisticated child.

“I HAVE JUST bought a new dress for a poor woman, and sent it to her,” said old Uncle Jorkins to Miss Pry. “How very kind of you! It is just like you!” exclaimed that inquisitive lady, adding, “And pray who was the poor woman that you made so happy?” “It was my wife, madam,” answered Uncle Jorkins.

A MEMBER OF CONGRESS having omitted to frank a copy of his speech to the editor of an “obscure sheet” in his district, the editor “got home” on him by stating that “the Hon. Mr. —— is entitled to our thanks for courteously refraining from sending us a copy of his late speech on the Chinese question.”

A NEEDY POLITICIAN called on his representative in London, to get his influence in obtaining some Government employment. The member proceeded to write a letter of introduction: “This will introduce Mr. Chose, who desires employment—” “Hold on!” cried the constituent, “hold on! It isn't employment I want—it's a Government berth!”

A DOCTOR well skilled in the medical art, ‘Mongst others, on pleasure resolved to depart, And leave his domestic concerns.

“But what will become of his patients the while?”

“Oh, fear not,” a neighbour replied, with a smile;

“They will live—till the doctor returns.”

June 24, 1882.

TO THE READER.

"DREGS AND FROTH."—Although the author of this story of to-day, to give an air of reality and probability to its incidents and characters, has here and there used the real names of real places, he wishes it to be distinctly understood that the descriptions do not apply to special individuals, but to characteristic types. He is perfectly familiar, for instance, with the class of theatrical performers called "supers," but he was never in his life under the boards of the Lyceum Theatre.—EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER."

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W.—Early Welsh history is based on "The Chronicle of Cadoc of Llancarfan." It carries it down to the latter end of the thirteenth century. You will find very little of value here in ancient histories of England, and that little is mostly unreliable. In many a few cases actual facts are grossly misrepresented. Wales, there is good reason for believing, held out even against the Romans. It was the only portion of the Roman Empire which retained its ancient language; in the other parts of Britain the Latin language was spoken. There is the first part of a deeply-interesting article on the Welsh and Owen Glendower in last month's number of "Time"—a magazine rapidly rising in favour.

MATERFACIA.—1. Painted foot-baths, zinc bowls, etc., can be easily and effectually cleaned by wiping them round with a flannel rag soaked in paraffin oil. Rinse when clean in cold water to remove the smell. 2. Merino is the best fabric for children's wear. 3. Stimulants are poison to children. Bring them up to love milk, and they are hardly likely to develop into drunkards.

ICONOCLAST.—The lines—

"Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies,"

are from Pope's "Essay on Man," Epistle iv.

DECORUM.—Leap-year is found by dividing the date of the year by four, and if there is no remainder it is leap-year, but if there is it shows how many years have elapsed since leap-year.

FLAME OF LOVE.—You say the gentleman presented the rosebud to you standing upright; in that case it signified, "I fear, but I hope." Had you returned it held downwards, as you suggested, the answer would have been, "You must neither hope nor fear." Hardly what you intended it to be, eh?

MINNIE.—The *n* is not aspirated in the following words: herb, honest, humour, honour, heir, hour, hostler, and their derivations.

BALLET.—It is not at all unusual that the hair of a person suffering from violent mental excitement should turn white in a night. Mademoiselle Campana, visiting Marie Antoinette, says, "I was struck with the astounding change misfortune had wrought upon Marie Antoinette's features; her whole head of hair had turned white during her transit from Varennes to Paris."

A CONSTANT READER.—Persons subject to blushing should never try to avoid it—beauty is by it tenfold increased. But, since it so much distresses you, practice self-control, and if you are determined you will soon gain the mastery.

L. M. C.—We have had no experience of Mrs. James' herbal ointment; but if you wish to obtain a bright, healthy complexion, you must pay strict attention to diet, exercise, and cleanliness. Food should be wholesome, nutritious, and sufficient, and you should get as much out-door exercise as possible.

WILLIAM MOORE.—Mr. Wright's work, published by Messrs. Cassell, Petter, & Galpin.

T. GARLAND.—See answer to A. J. M., in No. 992 of THE LONDON READER.

RED CLAY.—We are sorry we cannot give you the information you require.

BLUE-EYED BEAUTY.—1. See answer to C. Shearn, No. 997 of THE LONDON READER. 2. Caused by flesh-worms.

LOYALTY.—1. The "Civil Service Guide," published by Longmans & Co., price 3s. 6d. 2. He could only claim a month's wages. 3. Walker's "Rhyming Dictionary" is out of print, but you might pick it up second-hand.

I. D. J.—Your three questions were answered in our last number.

NEMO.—Try Clarke's blood mixture.

FULLER.—It is a deadly poison. We do not know where you could procure it.

DIRECTOR.—1. You will find Judson's gold paint very useful. Having tried it ourselves, we can thoroughly recommend it. 2. We will ascertain the date for you. 3. Esthetic means pertaining to the perception of the beautiful.

MAGGIE BELL.—1. Sullivan's is a very good one, and is used in the board schools. 2. About a hundred a year.

INDIGENT.—1. She was not guilty of theft in taking her wearing apparel. 2. We cannot help you. 3. Advertise in the daily papers.

FORMOSA.—1. We must not betray the secrets of the trade. 2. Not for some time.

WENTWORTH B.—1. Light travels from the sun to the earth in eight minutes; but it has been computed that it would take more than three years in coming to us from

the nearest fixed star. 2. Australia is the largest island in the world. 3. He was not hanged.

AUNT EMMA.—Take it to a hair-dresser.

BLUE BLACK.—When two opposing Members of Parliament agree to absent themselves, and not to vote, it is termed "pairing off."

ROBIN.—1. Yorkshire is larger than any two other counties in England. 2. Certainly.

CLANCARTY.—We cannot agree with you in your strictures on Mr. Irving's histrio-nomic powers.

TUNBRIDGE GREEN.—1. Why not? He is eligible, and might succeed. 2. For a term of years, perhaps seven. 3. The son takes precedence.

FIASCO.—We should just think you had put your foot in it! Why did you open your mouth so wide? The best thing you can do now is to repent of your sins. Seriously, it will require all your skill to frame a suitable apology. If it be accepted, you will have "confirmation strong as Holme Writ" that the young lady is of a truly Christian disposition and temper.

JEAN PAUL.—The Fates, or Parcs, were the three sisters who were supposed by the ancients to spin the thread of human life. Lachesis is represented with a spindle, and signifies lot, or chance; Clotho, or the spinner, holds the thread; and Atropos, unalterable fate, holds the scissors with which she cuts it off.

JUNG FRAU.—"Tandem felix" ("happy at last") is the inscription on the tomb of Count Tessin, governor of Gustavus III. of Sweden.

**"Domum mansit,
Lanam fecit."**
("She kept the house and spun wool") is the epitaph of a Roman matron.

"COMIN' THRO' THE RYE."—As beautiful a story as one need wish to read. Ditto, "A Sussex Idyll."

ETIQUETTE.—Your husband should precede you at church, or in a public assembly; but he should allow you to pass him on arriving at your seats, waiting till you are seated before sitting down himself. You are wise to insist on a proper amount of respect and observance being still paid you by him. It is the worst thing possible when a man grows tired of showing his wife those little attentions which do so much to brighten the path of life.

GRONCH'S DARLING.—1. Two feathers, if carefully arranged, would not look vulgar. 2. They should be toned down by their harmonising colours. 3. Black is flattering to a blonde.

SWEET HOME.—1. A very nice name indeed. 2. Princess Helene is the niece of the Queen of Sweden and sister to the Queen of the Netherlands. 3. The Archbishop of York is in favour of Sunday closing.

NELLIE GRANT.—1. You can get a paper pattern of the garment. 2. Twelve of each. 3. Towels are always included. 4. Seven yards to the pair. 5. Early in June.

HARD TIMES.—Try vegetarianism. Many contrive to live very comfortably on a few pence a day—we should not care to say how few.

EXCURSIONIST.—1. The Irish exclamation "Och hone!" appears to be related to the old, and now, perhaps, obsolete, Welsh exclamation "Ochan!" ("Alas!") and the Gaelic "Ochain!" 2. No. 3. The sabot is made of nothing but wood: it is, in fact, a mere block of wood rudely shaped to look like a shoe, with a hollow in it for the foot. It is cruelly hard, and very uncomfortable to wear, hence the custom of thrusting wisps of hay into it to protect the foot, or wrapping rags round the feet.

A IRISH SINGER.—Tradition tells us that three brothers of the O'Burrough family, named Beothach (who was a judge), Boirbhlaich (the bishop), and Moistóile (who was a poet), composed and digested the civil and ecclesiastical laws of Ireland, in the seventh century. Their code is that referred to in your extract as "Brathaneimhadh," or "The Sacred Judgments."

LOVE-LORN.—It is supposed that Abelard was nearly forty years of age and Eloise eighteen when first they met.

JANE E. G.—You are probably suffering from a stoppage of the lachrymatory duct. The constant watering of the eye proves it. Try Clarke's blood mixture; it has been known to cure a bad case in less than a week.

A. MORTIMER.—Philomela is the ancient name of the nightingale. The sweetest song is said to be that of the Persian bird. The nightingale usually begins to sing at the latter end of April. As a cage-bird it requires considerable attention and patient care. One of its peculiarities is a dislike of change in situation.

SELBORNE.—The reply will be too long for this column; but you will find the internal structure of the oyster very curious, and one which well repays dissection.

OLD BOY.—The yew grows most rapidly in a rich moist soil and a shady position.

G. S.—You are suffering from indigestion. We often give serious attention to the selection and preparing of our food, without being equally considerate of the conditions and manner in which we partake of it. The ordinary responsibilities and duties of life are nowadays so serious, and so absorbent of all our thoughts, efforts, and energies, as to leave little time for that leisurely enjoyment of a meal which is essential to the reception of its full benefit. A dinner or lunch hurriedly eaten in the midst of the day's work, when the nerves are too highly strung, the mind anxious and excited, and the demand upon our time most urgent and pressing, is often but an introduction to those evils of dyspepsia of which you complain, and which may exercise the most disastrous influence upon both our prospects and our happiness. A bad temper, fretful and irritable, despondency, and the inactivity of despair, ending in suicide, are as often traceable to this cause as to any other.

ONCE MORE.—The Marches of Wales, from "mark," a boundary line or limit, were in the hands of the Anglo-Norman kings nominally, but really in the hands of the Anglo-Norman nobles called the Lords Marches.

AMADIS.—1. "Robert of Sicily" is by Longfellow. 2. "She walks in beauty" is from one of Byron's Hebrew melodies. 3. The verses you send are by no means deficient in merit, but are not quite up to publication standard.

C. W. S.—The Rebecca riots arose in South Wales, and almost resulted in a national insurrection. They had no political origin, but were due at first to the belief of these ancient Britons that turnpikes and toll-bars were more numerous in Wales than they were in England; for no people are more fiery and persistent antagonists when they consider themselves wronged than the Welsh are. As Mr. A. H. Wall has pointed out in "Time," they never know when they are beaten. The Welsh had very little to take to market; they had to pay high road tolls out of this little, and so they became bitter and exasperated. The riots began in 1839, when some new gates with increased tolls were put up on the borders of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen, which a number of persons merrily pulled down, with much noise, but otherwise harmlessly. The toll-collectors were never injured. Rebecca was the name given to the leaders in the popular crusade against tolls—probably because they grotesquely assumed, by way of disguise, the dresses of women when the bars and toll-houses were destroyed. In some attacks all the men were dressed as women. Soldiers were found useless in putting down the riots, but a more just and equitable system of exacting tolls at once put an end to them.

EVA.—A charming little face and a dainty little figure, but why—oh why—do you strive to ruin it gracefully flowing lines, as well as your health, by tight-lacing? We really cannot believe that you are without a lover—the idea is too, too, utterly too absurd. It's quite an insult to suppose our credibility is so excessive. We feel that we have no choice between disbelief—however uncomplimentary it may be—and an utter contempt for the young of our own sex. Old as we are, we actually liked your photograph—we did, indeed—it is so lovely!

J. M.—Marriage between all degrees of cousins is legal.

HARRIET.—Astore, or Astoreth, signifies "the queen of heaven." Astoreth was the goddess moon of Syrian mythology. In "Paradise Lost," Milton says:

"With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called
Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns."

2. The camellia signifies "unpretended excellence."

NOVELIST.—asks: "Do you or any other editor pay authors for their literary productions?" 1. Decidedly; literary productions are paid for. 2. We have at present no opening.

RUFUS.—The *s* is mute in "Gil Blas."

P. B. C.—We do not sympathize with your friend at all. If for mere caprice she rejected two suitors, she deserves to spend the rest of her life in single blessedness.

EXPECTANT.—The skin, after the black spots have been eradicated, should be bathed in diluted spirits of wine.

DROWSINESS.—The Duke of Wellington's maxim was that "when a man turned in his bed, it was time for him to turn out of it."

JEWISH.—Yes, the Jews will accept proselytes, but they do not seek after them.

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